United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name   Russell Hotel

Other names/site number   Charleston Hotel

Name of related Multiple Property Listing   N/A

2. Location

Street & number	200 East Commercial Street	N/A	not for publication
City or town	Charleston	N/A	vicinity

State   Missouri   Code   MO   County   Mississippi County   Code   133   Zip code   63834

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this __x__ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property __x__ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national   ___ statewide   __x__ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: __x__ A   ___ B   __x__ C   ___ D

(signature)   DEPUTY SHPO   5-10-22
Signature of certifying official/Title   Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official   Date

Title   State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register   _____ determined eligible for the National Register

_____ determined not eligible for the National Register   _____ removed from the National Register

_____ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

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NPS Form 10-900

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
OMB No. 1024-0018

Russell Hotel
Name of Property

Mississippi County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

x	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	**Total**

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Music Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

Terra Cotta

roof: Not visible

other:

x	**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUTATION PAGES**

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

[ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] B removed from its original location.

[ ] C a birthplace or grave.

[ ] D a cemetery.

[ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[ ] F a commemorative property.

[ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

[x] **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUTATION PAGES**

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1918 - ca.1965

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder

Parlow, William Ezra/Architect

Gassman, George H./Builder

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_x_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property   Less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 36.923506°   -89.348970°   3 _____   _____
   Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 _____   _____   4 _____   _____
   Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)
_____ NAD 1927   or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____ _____ _____   3 _____ _____ _____
   Zone   Easting   Northing   Zone   Easting   Northing

2 _____ _____ _____   4 _____ _____ _____
   Zone   Easting   Northing   Zone   Easting   Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   Debbie Sheals and Rose Campbell

organization   Building Preservation, LLC   date   April 19, 2022

street & number   29 South Ninth St. #210   telephone   573-874-3779

city or town   Columbia   state   MO   zip code 65201

e-mail   Debsheals@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
    - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
    - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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Russell Hotel
Name of Property

Mississippi County, MO
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Russell Hotel**

City or Vicinity: **Charleston**

County: **Mississippi County**   State: **Missouri**

Photographer: **Deb Sheals**

Date
Photographed: **August 27, 2021**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1. South and west elevations, camera facing northeast.
2. South elevation, camera facing north.
3. South elevation, camera facing north.
4. South corner elevation, camera facing northeast.
5. South and east elevations, camera facing northwest.
6. North and east elevations, camera facing southwest.
7. North and west elevations, camera facing southeast.
8. West elevation, camera facing east.
9. West elevation, camera facing east.
10. First floor lobby, camera facing north.
11. First floor west entrance interior, camera facing west.
12. First floor dining room, camera facing northeast.
13. First floor kitchen, camera facing west.
14. First floor stairwell, camera facing north.
15. Lower-level barbershop, camera facing southeast.
16. Lower-level toilets and washrooms, camera facing west.
17. Lower-level billiards room/The Cellar, camera facing southwest.
18. Second floor stairwell, camera facing northeast.
19. Second floor hallway, camera facing south.
20. Second floor room, camera facing east.
21. Second floor hallway, camera facing east.
22. Second floor hallway, camera facing south.
23. Second floor north stairwell, camera facing north.
24. Third floor hallway, camera facing west.
25. Third floor hotel room, camera facing south
26. Third floor hallway, camera facing north.
27. Third floor stairwell, camera facing southwest.

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Figure Log:
Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1. Aerial photo, with a Scale and Coordinates. (Google Earth, Accessed 2021)
2. Context map. (Google Earth, Accessed 2021)
3. 1919 Sanborn Map, with current property lines added.
4. Historic Post Cards (2 pages)
5. West Doorway Photos
6. Ladies' Waiting Nook
7. Current First Floor Plan
8. Current Lower Level Floor Plan
9. Current Second Floor Plan (Third floor is very similar)
10. Charleston Hotels, 1837-1965 (2 pages)
11. Buildings Designed by W.E. Parlow (2 pages)
12. Local Comparative Properties
13. Russell Hotel Construction, ca. July 1917
14. Assorted Advertisements for the Russell Hotel
15. Dining Room of the Russell Hotel, 1953
16. Photo Key (3 pages)

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Russell Hotel
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  N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable) N/A
└───┘

Summary:

The Russell Hotel, at 200 East Commercial Street in Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri, occupies a prominent corner lot on the east side of the downtown Charleston. It is a three-story brick hotel that has a high basement, a concrete structural system, and a flat roof. It was built in 1918 as a hotel and served that function into the 1960s. The Colonial Revival style building includes symmetrical fenestration and classically inspired terra cotta ornamentation that includes a large cornice and bands of molding, stepped jack arches and keystones above the windows, and an elaborate surround at the oversized west entryway. The majority of the windows are modern; all of the exterior terra cotta components are original.[1] The south-facing façade has a wide recessed central entranceway and a large terra cotta wall plaque that spells out "THE RUSSELL." in raised lettering. Just below the name plate is a row of three original terra cotta lion head plaques. The plaques originally served as connection points for the support chains of a front canopy that is no longer extant. The west wall of the building, which faces First Street, is as highly detailed as the façade. It includes a large, recessed entranceway that has an ornamental terra cotta surround. The rear wall and the east side wall are simpler, with flat brick walls and little architectural detailing. The basement and first floor of the building have rectangular footprints, while the upper two floors have a large lightwell that creates a horseshoe shaped floorplate. The lightwell faces north to the rear of the property. Interior spaces are largely intact. The front (south) entrance leads to a spacious lobby that has original marble wainscot and posts, tile flooring, and a beamed ceiling and skylight. An equally intact dining room is east of the lobby, and there is an original staircase and the second formal entryway west of it. The lower level of the hotel, which is partially above grade, includes an open space that was originally a billiards room, along with smaller public and service rooms. The top two floors contain thirty-nine hotel rooms, which due to renovations, is sightlessly less than when it opened with approximately forty-two rooms.[2] The hotel is the only resource on the property, which covers roughly half of a city block. It is a contributing building. The building has seen no additions, and few major exterior changes. Key rooms and circulation spaces of the interior are also intact, and the building is immediately recognizable to its period of significance.

Character Defining Features
The hotel retains most original character-defining features:
- Exterior form and patterns of fenestration. (Photos 1-8)
- Exterior architectural detailing, including name plate, lion heads, cornice, string courses, windowsills, and jack arches. (Photos 1-3, 5, 7-9)

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[1] The following terms are used throughout to describe resources and materials: *Original* features were installed when the building was constructed. *Historic* features were installed within the period of significance, which for this property is 1918-ca. 1965. *Non-historic or modern* features were added after ca. 1965, the end of the period of significance.

[2] Early descriptions include varied numbers for hotel rooms; a description published shortly after it opened cited 42 rooms. "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel Which Was Opened Last Sunday," *Enterprise-Courier* (Charleston, MO), August 8, 1918, 1.

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- South and west entryways, including the west door surround and both sets of entry doors and sidelights. (Photos 2, 5, 7-9, 11.)
- Original lobby, dining room, and a "ladies waiting nook" on the first floor: plans and finishes. (Photos 10-12, 14, Figure 6.)
- Two original staircases, including balustrades. (Photos 14, 18, 23, 27)
- A large original billiard room and barbershop in the lower level. (Photos 15 and 17.) The billiard room also housed a regionally prominent music club during the period of significance.
- Corridors and some historic room partitions on upper floors, including door trim and some historic doors. (Photos 19, 21, 22, 24 and 26.)

Elaboration:

Setting
The hotel occupies a large lot at the northeast corner of East Commercial and North First Streets.[3] (Figure 1. Aerial Photo.) It is near the northeast edge of downtown Charleston, one block east of Main Street, which is the primary commercial artery in the area. (Figure 2. Context Map.) Most properties east of the hotel contain modest houses, and nearby lots on other sides have one- and two-story commercial buildings.

The lot is bounded by Commercial Street on the south, First Street on the west, private property to the north, and a small public alley on the east. The property to the north contains a two-story house that appears to date to the late 1800s or early 1900s. The rest of that lot contains a mix of older asphalt and grass. Within the boundary, the east part of the lot has a mix of asphalt and grass, with wide curb cuts along Commercial Street to the south. The grass area is closest to the building. (Photo 5.) Historic Sanborn maps show that the curb cuts served a small gas station that was added to the east end of the lot between 1919 and 1927; the gas station was demolished after 1949. (Figure 3. 1919 Sanborn Map.)

The hotel building is located at the far west edge of its lot, adjacent to the public sidewalk that forms the western boundary of the property. (The sidewalk is not part of the hotel property.) The building is also on or very close to the north boundary line. The front wall of the hotel sits back from the south public sidewalk approximately eight feet, with a flat grass lawn between the building and the sidewalk. There are no other buildings or structures on the lot.

Property Description
The hotel has a solid cubic form, with a rectangular footprint, a flat roof, and brick walls. (Photo 1.) It has two principal elevations—the south wall, which faces Commercial Street, and the west wall which, faces First Street. It is approximately ninety feet east to west and seventy feet north to south. It has three full stories plus a raised basement level that sits well above grade level. All exterior walls have been painted. The back wall and the lightwell have a thin coat of white paint over common red brick walls. (Photos 6 and 7.) The other three walls are all a brownish-orange

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[3] Sanborn maps show that First Street was originally named East Street; it was being referred to locally as First Street by 1918, and the name changed on Sanborn maps between 1927 and 1949.

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that is comparable to natural brick. The brick walls appear to have been painted once around 1980 and again around 2008. It is not clear what color the front and side walls were when the hotel was new. Early postcard renderings include one version with reddish walls and one with brown, but chipped bricks elsewhere indicate the front and side wall bricks were originally a dark reddish brown. (See Figure 4. Historic Post Cards.) The current paint includes a light-colored base coat that is showing through around the exterior stairs to the lower level. The lighter paint layer may be from an early wall sign.

The exterior of the building is distinguished by refined ornamentation that is concentrated on the south and west walls, each of which faces a public street. Much of that detailing is composed of light-colored architectural terra cotta that is glazed to emulate stone. The building was clearly designed to take advantage of its corner lot; the two street-facing walls have very similar architectural ornamentation, and each has a large formal entranceway.

Windows
All window openings on the exterior walls are original, but most of the windows date to late 1900s or early 2000s. Unless otherwise noted below, the modern windows fit the historic openings well and are hung windows, like the originals were. They differ in that they are aluminum instead of wood and those on the south, west, and east walls have multi-light grids between the glass panes. Most window openings on the first through third floors of the back wall have modern 1/1 windows; a few of those openings have been boarded over. All except one of the basement windows openings on the north have been covered with plywood. (Photos 6 and 7.) The uncovered opening has an early 1/1 wood window, and many of the others that are visible from inside have no sashes at all. The window openings in the lightwell are also original; they contain a mix of modern and historic windows, many of which are covered by painted plywood. (Photos 6 and 7.) The surviving historic windows in the lightwell are in very poor condition.

South Wall
The wide south wall, which faces Commercial Street, features a central entrance and symmetrical patterns of fenestration. The south wall has a wide terra cotta cornice that is topped by a short brick parapet that has matching terra cotta coping. The cornice extends down to the tops of the third-floor window openings, which have flat terra cotta lug sills. There are ten window openings on the third floor, arranged symmetrically. Starting from the left, there are two wide 10/10 windows, a wide opening with paired 8/8 windows, a smaller 4/4 window, two more paired 8/8s, a small 4/4, another paired 8/8, and two more 10/10s. (Photo 2.) A large inset wall plaque spans the center of the upper façade, between the second and third floors. (Photo 3.) It is made of terra cotta or cast stone. The rectangular plaque has a wide foliated anthemion finial and corners accented with small squares filled with circles. The plaque is filled with raised

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letters that spell "THE RUSSELL." (The period is on the sign.) Large circles flank the hotel name.[4]

The second floor of the south wall has ten window openings that are the same size and shape as those on the third floor. They differ in that most are topped with large terra cotta jack arches that have prominent keystones, and there is a band of terra cotta molding that spans the front wall in lieu of windowsills. The two double window openings directly below the building identification sign do not have jack arches or any kind of ornamental lintels. Five terra cotta lionhead reliefs on the second floor originally held support rods for a large canopy that sheltered the front entrance. (Photos 2 and 3, Figure 4.) The canopy was removed between the 1930s and 1977, probably after the period of significance.[5]

The first floor of the south wall features the primary entrance to the hotel, a partially recessed entry porch that contains a wide double doorway into the hotel lobby. As a primary point of contact with customers of the hotel the porch and entry are character-defining features. The porch is centered in the wall, beneath the "RUSSELL" wall plaque. The wall above the porch opening shows signs of having been repaired after the canopy was removed, as well as stubs of steel I-beams that were cut off as part of that project. (Photo 3.) The porch has solid brick railing walls and a concrete floor. Stone steps flanked by brick knee walls lead down from the porch to the front sidewalk. (Photos 2 and 4.)

The doorway into the lobby contains two full-light wood doors with matching sidelights. A tall transom is boarded over inside and out; the transom sash appears to be in place, but the glass may be missing. The doors, sidelights, and all associated framing are historic and in fair to good condition. A smaller single doorway on the east wall of the porch leads directly into the original dining room. (Photo 2 and Figure 7, First Floor Plan.) That doorway appears to be early but may not be historic. It contains a full-light wood door that is in fair condition. There is a single tall window opening on each side of the large front doorway, the openings have historic lug sills and modern 12/12 hung sashes. The three outer bays on either side of the recessed entrance mirror the fenestration patterns of the upper floors, with matching stepped jack arches. The single openings have 15/5 windows, and the double windows have 12/12s.

The high basement walls on the south wall feature brick rustication that extends up to the sill line of the first-floor windows, which is marked by a projecting band of terra cotta molding. That band is slightly larger than the one at the second floor. (Photo 2.) The brick walls of the front porch have the same type of brick work, along with matching terra cotta caps on the knee walls

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[4] The name plate, lion heads, cornice and jack arches are all important design elements that serve as character defining-features.
[5] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier,* August 17, 1989, 12; "Russell Hotel," Postcards in the Collection of the Mississippi Historical Society, 1920s and 1930s.

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and railings. (Photo 2.) A small exterior staircase west of the porch leads down to an original basement level entrance. That doorway has a modern glass and aluminum door. The basement stairwell is edged by a historic painted pipe railing. (Photo 4.) There are five windows in the south basement wall. Starting on the left there is one square opening covered with plywood, then one taller 10/10 hung window and the single doorway. (Photo 4.) The covered window, which is visible from within, has a 10/10 window that is in pieces. (Photo 15.)

West Wall
The west wall of the hotel, which overlooks First Street, is detailed very much like the south wall, with symmetrical fenestration and terra cotta ornamentation. (Photos 7 and 8.) The cornice, parapets, and bands of terra cotta molding of the south wall all wrap around to the west side, and the basement level has the same type of rusticated brickwork. Window detailing is the same as well, with terra cotta jack arches over the first and second floor windows. All terra cotta work on the west wall is character-defining.

The west wall also has a large central entrance into the hotel, but it differs from the south in that it is fully recessed. It is set into a large rectangular opening that extends from the sidewalk almost to the tops of the first-floor windows. The opening features a Classical stone or terra cotta surround that has Doric pilasters, and ornamentation that echoes the motifs on the front name plaque. The surround is topped with a simple entablature that has circular medallions and foliated anthemion finials. (Photos 8 and 9.) Although some early postcard renderings show doors and transoms just inside that opening, there is no physical evidence of a door frame or any other indication that those doors were ever installed. (See Figures 4 and 5.) There were no doors in place there in 1981, the date of the earliest found photo of that wall. As an important point of contact with customers of the hotel the west entry is a character-defining feature.

Inside the west entryway is a tiled landing and a wide marble staircase that leads to a second landing and a doorway that is nearly identical to the one on the south wall. That doorway, which is covered with plywood on the exterior, has the same type of glass doors and sidelights, as well as a three-light transom, all of which appear to be original. (Photo 11.) It opens to a tiled alcove off the main lobby. (Figure 7.)

There are nine window openings each on the second and third floors of the west wall. Working left to right, there are paired 8/8s, a smaller 6/6 in an opening that has been partially framed in to accommodate a new bathroom, two full sized 6/6s, and at the center, a three-part grouping that has one 8/8 flanked by narrow 4/4s. Continuing to the right is another 6/6 in an opening that has been partially framed in, then two 6/6s, and paired 8/8s. The first floor of the west wall has four window openings on each side of the entranceway, one double 9/9 at each edge of the wall and three single 9/9s. The shorter window openings of the west basement wall are the same width as those on the first. Moving left to right, there is one paired 8/8, then a window-sized opening that is filled with a flat painted metal panel that appears to have been the opening to a

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coal chute. Continuing to the right, there are two 6/6s, the central entry, three 6/6s, and paired 8/8s.

East Side Wall
The east side wall is much more simply detailed than the walls that face the public streets. (Photos 5 and 6.) It is a flat brick wall topped with simple dark coping, with no cornice, bands of molding or other ornamentation. It is filled with even rows of windows that are not symmetrically arranged. The window openings have simple stone or terra cotta lug sills and no lintels. The top two floors each have seven window openings. Working left to right, there are two paired 6/6s, a small 1/1, two paired 6/6s, a smaller 1/1, and another pair of 6/6s. The far right opening on the third floor has smaller 6/6s that are topped and flanked with solid frame infill.

Moving left to right on the first floor, there are five large double 9/9 windows, a single doorway with a tall transom panel, and one more pair of 9/9s that are covered with plywood. (Photos 5 and 12.) The first-floor doorway is accessed by a short concrete staircase that has a pipe railing. The doorway and stairs are historic; the transom panel and flat metal door in that door opening are modern. (Photo 6.) There are five basement windows on that wall. They align with those on the first floor, with one less on the north end. They are the same width as those above, but less than half as tall; each has paired 6/6s. Two have been covered with plywood, but the windows are visible inside the building. (Photo 17.) There is also a single doorway at the north end of the basement wall, just below the one on the first floor. It is reached by a short flight of below grade concrete steps. (Photo 6.)

North Wall
The north wall is a flat brick wall with no applied ornament or architectural detailing. It has three bays, each approximately thirty feet wide. The two end bays are the full height of the building, while the center bay, which opens to the lightwell, is only one and one-half stories tall. (Photos 6 and 7.) The end bays contain one scupper and one long downspout each, and the center bay has two scuppers that drain to the other downspouts. Each of the end bays has modern wall mounted electrical service lines. (Photo 7.)

The upper floors of the east bay include a short brick penthouse at the roofline, and a single column of four windows that open to the landings of an interior staircase centered in that bay. (Figure 9. Upper Floor Plans.) The lower two windows are boarded over and the upper two have modern 1/1 windows. The upper two openings also have small metal fire escapes and a wall mounted ladder; they might be historic but are not original. (Photo 6.) The upper floors of the west bay have a similar arrangement of 1/1 windows and fire escapes, but there are only two windows, and they align with the second and third floors instead of intermediate stair landings.
Aside from the windows by the fire escapes, there are five window openings on the first floor, nine at the basement level, and a tall window or door opening near the west wall that sits lower

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than the north windows; its sill is at the first-floor line. (See photo 6.) Left to right at the first floor is a double window opening that is boarded over, and a single one that is boarded over; the windows and all associated frames are missing in those two openings. Continuing left to right, there is a single modern 1/1 sash that is half boarded over, and two singles with 1/1 modern windows.

Going left to right at the basement level is a double window opening covered with plywood, four single openings covered with plywood, one single 1/1 wood sash that appears to be historic, and three more single openings covered with plywood. Four of the boarded over basement openings contain modern sashes, four others contain older sashes that are in ruins, and one has no sash or frame at all. The lower opening near the west end of the wall is infilled with a frame wall faced with plywood. There is an opening at the top of that infill for a window-sized air conditioner.

Lightwell
The lightwell is in the center of the second and third floors. It is approximately thirty feet wide and fifty feet long. It opens to the north. The base of the lightwell is the roof of the first floor. It is covered with built up roofing and contains two skylights, all of which are in very poor condition. The southernmost skylight is above the lobby. (Photo 10.) The northernmost skylight, which is over the original kitchen area, is the smaller of the two. (Photo 13.) Both skylights have short sidewalls and hipped glass roofs; the skylights are in fair to poor condition.

The brick walls of the lightwell are two stories, with white paint and the same type of dark tile coping used on the north and east walls. The masonry there is in poor condition—bricks have fallen from a small area above the north third floor windows. (Photo 6.) Each wall of the lightwell is lined with even rows of double and single window openings. The east wall has three double openings and three singles on each floor. The south end wall has two double openings on each floor. (Photo 24.) The west side wall has two double openings and four singles on each floor. One of those single sets is in the front interior staircase, with the windows at the landings. Many of the window openings in the lightwell have historic windows that are in poor to very poor condition. (The upper floors have suffered from years of water infiltration and lack of maintenance.) Some openings are missing sashes and frames altogether and a few have modern metal-framed windows that appear to be newer than the multilight sashes on the front and side walls. The exterior of almost all of those openings are covered with plywood.

First Floor Interior
The interior spaces of the hotel retain a good deal of original fabric. (See Figure 7.) That is especially true of the public areas on the first floor, which have seen very few permanent changes. The wide south entrance opens directly into the spacious original lobby, which is in the center of the first floor. (Photo 10.) The lobby is an open rectangular room that has plastered walls and four large square columns that support a beamed plaster ceiling. The plastered

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columns have simple capitals with egg and dart molding, and high marble wainscot that is topped with narrow dark wood molding. The original front desk of the hotel runs between the two north columns. The desk is clad in the same type of marble as the columns, and that stone is also used as wainscot on the lobby walls. The lobby has a tile floor that includes ornamental borders and marble trim at the base of all walls. With the exception of some missing wainscot in the southeast corner of the room, all finishes in the lobby are historic and probably original. As the visual and functional center of the hotel operation, the plan and finishes of the lobby are character-defining features.

A wide alcove on the west side of the lobby opens to the west entryway. (Photo 11.) That alcove has the same type of marble wainscot and tile flooring found in the lobby, along with plastered upper walls and a flat plaster ceiling. A wide former doorway in the north wall of the alcove is filled with glass blocks that are several decades old but probably not historic. When open, that doorway would have provided easy access to the sample rooms. The doorway has the same type of dark wood casing used around the opening to the alcove and both sets of entry doors. A small row of offices behind the front desk have glass-filled upper walls that are trimmed with matching woodwork. (Photo 10.) The millwork is historic.

A double doorway in the east wall of the lobby leads into the original hotel dining room, which is as little-changed as the lobby. (Photo 12.) The large rectangular dining room has pilastered walls filled with large windows. Deep ceiling beams and crown molding are ornamented with narrow egg and dart molding and ornamental plaster wall brackets. All of the walls have high pained wood baseboards and wide painted wood trim at the room at the height of the windowsills. The windows and doorways are edged with matching flat wood trim. The dining room has a tile floor that is comparable to that in the lobby, with a slightly more elaborate pattern. A small frame vestibule in the northwest corner of the room constitutes the only modern alteration in the room. All other elements described above are historic and probably original. The dining room is one of the most elaborately detailed and most used public spaces in the hotel, the plan and finishes of that room are therefore character-defining features.

The north end of the first floor contains former service areas such as a serving room and the former kitchen. That area has seen extensive loss of original fabric due to sustained water infiltration and exposure to the weather. (Photo 13.) The walls are down to bare brick in some areas, while others have early plaster or modern PVC or FRP wall coverings. The existing concrete floors appear to be original; some areas have modern ceramic and vinyl tile. The northwest corner of the first floor has a pair of small rectangular rooms that served as sample rooms for traveling salesmen when the hotel was new. (One is visible in the background of photo 13.) Those rooms have plaster ceilings, and some plaster walls and millwork that are historic. Flooring includes a small amount of early tile that matches the tile used in the lobby, as well as concrete that may have historically been covered with thin asbestos tile.

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The southwest corner of the first floor has an early office space that has mostly modern partitions and finishes, plus a small area adjacent to the lobby that was originally designated as a "ladies' waiting nook."[6] The small nook has a plaster ceiling and three plaster walls. (Figure 6. Ladies' Waiting Nook.) The other side of the room is edged with ornamental metal balustrade, and the room has ornamental tile flooring that features yet another pattern. All of the finishes in the nook are historic and probably original. The ladies' waiting nook is an intact link to the early hotel operations and norms of the day; as such it is a character-defining features.

Interior Stairs
Just north of the ladies' nook is an original formal staircase that connects all four levels of the building. (Figures 6-9, Photo 14.) The first-floor walls around that stair have the same kind of marble wainscot used in the lobby, and the floor between the stairs and the nook has the same type of tile used in the nook; it differs in that it is bordered with marble instead of a tile pattern. The treads and risers of the stairs between the basement and the second floor are faced with the same grey marble.

The U-shaped stair has painted metal railings and newel posts between the first and second floor, and the stair to the basement is enclosed with plaster walls. The metal railings on the first-floor match those of the nearby ladies' nook. They have heavy square newel posts with inset panels adorned with botanical motifs, and metal newel capos accented with egg and dart molding. The railings have metal grills that have a generally geometrical pattern, topped with molded wood handrails. The stairs from the second floor to the third are less ornate and constructed all of wood. Those stairs have simple square wood newel posts and turned wood balusters topped with molded wood handrails. The stairs and treads are also of wood. (Photos 18 and 27.)

There is also a smaller service stair in the northeast corner of the building. It is historic and probably original. (Photo 23.) That stair also links all four levels of the hotel. It is much smaller and simpler than the front stair, with plain pipe rails and utilitarian finishes. The stairs are of metal, with poured concrete or stone treads, and painted risers. The service stair is enclosed on all except the first floor, where it opens to a narrow hallway near the kitchen. Both sets of stairs were central to hotel operations, and the south staircase is also one of the most highly ornamented features of the hotel. Both staircases are character-defining features.

Lower-Level Interior
The lower level of the hotel contains a mix of public and utility areas. (Figure 8. Lower Level Plan.) The south entrance from the street opens to a small vestibule. The north and east walls of the vestibule are faced with modern gypboard; early descriptions of the hotel show that the

[6] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.

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entry was originally open to the front stairway.[7] The west wall of the vestibule is historic and finished with plaster. Double doors in that wall lead to an open corner room that housed a barbershop when the hotel was new. (Photo 15.) That large room is lined with windows. The window openings are original, but the casing may be modern. The room has ornamental tile flooring comparable to that used on the first floor, but with yet another field and border pattern. The walls have a mix of historic plaster and modern gypboard finishes, and most of the ceiling is covered with modern suspended acoustical tiles. Numerous pipes and conduits run along the surface of the ceiling above the newer tiles. As an intact link to commercial activities in the lower level of the hotel, the former barber shop is a character-defining feature.

There is another long narrow room north of the barbershop that appear to have housed what were described as toilets and washrooms in an article about the hotel published just after it opened.[8] (Photo 16.) That room has the same type of historic tile flooring as the barbershop, with historic plaster on the walls and ceiling. The tile floor bears the marks of early partitions as well as patched holes that probably contained pipes for toilets and sinks. There are also two tall built-in urinals in one corner of the room. Two windows in the west wall have simple painted casing that appears to be original.

The north end of the lower level contains utility areas, including rooms for coal and furnaces in the northwest corner. Other early uses of that area include a commissary that had a large ice box and water chiller, plus servants' rooms and the service stair to the upper floors.
Some of the early partitions in the commissary area have been removed in modern times. The walls include plain brick in the coal and furnace rooms and painted plaster elsewhere. Flooring is concrete and the ceilings have both plastered and unfinished concrete.

The center and east end of the lower level consists of a large open area filled with square concrete support posts. (Photo 17.) That room was a billiards room when the hotel was new and later housed a popular music hall. It has concrete flooring, and all posts, walls, and ceilings are finished with painted plaster. Many of those surfaces have a textured finish that may be modern. The ceiling has an even grid of concrete beams. The high windows that line the exterior walls have simple painted casing that appears to be original. There are a few modern wall mounted boxes below the front windows that may have contained plants at one time. As the site of one of the hotel's most notable commercial ventures, the former music hall is a character-defining feature. Overall, the lower- level floorplan and finishes are intact and in fair condition. They are in only fair condition due to water damage and a large amount of mold and mildew.

Upper Floor Interiors

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[7] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.
[8] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.

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The second and third floors of the hotel have nearly identical floorplans. (Figure 9. Upper Floor Plan.) Both floors overlook the large rear lightwell, and each has a U-shaped plan that features corridors lined with hotel rooms. The large formal staircase is just off the southwest corner of the light well, and the smaller service stair is at the north end of the east corridor. (Photos 18, 23 and 27.) The south end of the U has a hallway by the lightwell on each floor, with rooms to the south, overlooking Commercial Street. The corridors and stairs of the upper floors have seen few changes over the years. As intact circulation spaces that reflect the day-to-day operation of the hotel, they are character-defining features.

The east and west wings of each floor have central hallways, with rooms to either side. One larger room on the south side of the first floor was described as a parlor when the hotel was new, and all other rooms were either hotel rooms, closets, or bathrooms.[9] All or most doorways into the original hotel rooms are intact, and many retain historic doors and casing. (Photos 19, 21, 22, and 26.) Some of the hotel rooms, however, were reconfigured to accommodate changing functions that took place after the hotel closed. Those alterations included changing existing bathrooms and moving or adding walls to create new shared and private bathrooms. The hotel today has thirty-nine rooms, compared to approximately forty-two when it was new. Additionally, new stud walls were installed around the front staircase, presumably to create a rated-enclosure for code compliance. (See Figure 6.)

The second and third floors of the hotel also have very similar finishes. It appears that all rooms except bathrooms originally had wood flooring; wood flooring remains exposed in the hallways, but some of the rooms today have modern tile or carpet over the older wood flooring. Several historic bathrooms have original tile flooring. (Photo 20.) Many walls are finished with painted plaster, including those of the corridor and some of the walls between original hotel rooms. Most of the exterior walls have been furred for insulation and finished with gypboard. Ceilings on the third floor are all covered with suspended tile systems; comparable ceiling grids have recently been removed for the second-floor ceilings. The upper floors also retain a good deal of original millwork such as doors, transoms, door casing, and baseboards. Walls that have been furred do not have baseboards or window casing; those windows only have modern painted stools.

Many of the finishes on the upper floors of the hotel are in poor condition due to extended exposure to water and the elements, as well as vandalism. (Photos 24 and 25.) That is especially true on the third floor and in rooms that overlook the lightwell. Rooms off the lightwell have been exposed to water damage via missing or deteriorated windows as well as a leaking roof. Four to eight rooms near the north end of the building are missing even wall plaster and window frames. The building remains structurally sound, however, and the vast majority of the interior floorplans and finishes are in place and in at least fair condition.

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[9] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.

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Integrity and Summary of Alterations
Although the Russell Hotel retains an impressive amount of historic fabric, there have naturally been changes over the years. The most notable exterior alteration took place in the late 1900s or very early 2000s, when new aluminum windows were installed in all street-facing window openings. Fortunately, that change did not require permanent alterations to any of the masonry openings, and most of the new windows fill the original openings. The new windows also have hung sash like the original but differ in that they have between-the-glass muntin girds while the originals were 1/1s. Other exterior changes include removing a projecting neon sign and the front canopy from the south wall between the 1930s and 1977 and painting the brick exterior walls. The walls appear to have first been painted around 1980, when the building became senior housing, and may have been painted again during a second remodeling project in the early 2000s. Additionally, sloped canvas awnings shown on upper floor windows in early postcard renderings, if ever installed, were gone by 1977. (Those postcards also show doors in the west street-level doorway that do not appear to have ever been installed.)

The change to senior housing also appears to have spurred reconfiguration of upper floor hotel rooms and bathrooms. Additionally, the original office space in the southwest corner of the first floor has been subdivided, and glass blocks were installed in a doorway off the west entry alcove. The glass blocks may have been installed in the mid-twentieth century as part of a remodeling project that included adding an apartment to the former sample rooms in the northeast part of the first floor. (All signs of the apartment have since been removed.) Changes to secondary spaces such as the original kitchen and the utility areas in the lower level appear to be more recent. They include the loss of plaster and other finishes and partial demolition of some secondary walls. Those alterations were likely spurred by water damage as well as functional obsolescence. Even taken together, those changes have had a relatively minor impact on the historic character of the building, and the hotel continues to reflect its original function.

Conclusion
In spite of being vacant for years and not functioning as a hotel for decades, the Russell Hotel retains a strong sense of its time and place. The building retains integrity of design, workmanship, and materials, inside and out. It has seen few changes to exterior form and patterns of fenestration. Both formal entrances are intact, and aside from the neon sign, front canopy and original window sashes, almost all original exterior architectural ornamentation and materials are in place. Original exterior details of note include the large front name plate, cornices, the west door surround, and terra cotta windowsills and stepped jack arch lintels. Interior spaces are also intact, especially on the first floor, which retains the distinctive floorplan and finishes that made it the source of local pride for years. Intact original rooms on the first floor include the lobby, dining room, and ladies' waiting nook. The lower level retains the early barber shop as well as the billiards room that later housed a regionally prominent music venue, and upper floor circulation spaces are also intact. Important surviving interior finishes include

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beamed ceilings, marble wainscot, and tile floors in a variety of patterns. The formal front staircase is also noteworthy, with original ornamental railings, and marble treads and rises. The building is in its original location and the overall setting has seen few changes. It is near the edge of downtown Charleston, on a corner lot that influenced the design of the building. Historic feeling and association are also evident. The physical features of the hotel property continue to express the aesthetics of hotel design and management in the early twentieth century. The building has been a community icon for decades and it retains a strong local association with the period of significance.

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Summary

The Russell Hotel, located at 200 East Commercial Street in Charleston, Missouri, is named for U.S. Congressman Joseph J. Russell, who financed the hotel with a small syndicate of investors in 1918. It is locally significant under National Register Criterion A, in the area of Commerce, as a rare historic hotel that reflects Charleston's historic status as a regional trade center. It is also a good local example of an early twentieth-century "community hotel."[10] The hotel opened during a national period of hotel development that saw an increase in the construction of architecturally-impressive buildings in or near the downtown areas of small cities and towns. Community hotels like the Russell, which were often financed by local individuals or groups as a public benefit, were in operation during the time of racial segregation in the United States and therefore catered to white travelers and the local white community. In addition to boosting the local economy, community hotels frequently developed into civic centers and much-touted subjects of community pride. The Russell Hotel was no exception; the well-furnished, professionally designed building served as a center of community life in Charleston for decades. The building is also locally significant Under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture. Designed by Cape Girardeau architect W.E. Parlow, it is one of the most highly styled historic commercial buildings in downtown Charleston. The Russell was operated for most of its existence by the family of John R. Marable, an experienced hotelier from Malden, Missouri who bought it 1921. Under Marable family management, the lower level of the building housed a regionally prominent dance and music hall that remained in operation into the 1960s. The following decades brought a variety of owners and functions, but the end of Marable involvement effectively marked the end of this building's use as a hotel. The period of significance for the property is 1918-ca. 1965, which runs from the creation of the Russell Hotel by J.J. Russell to the end of the Marable family management. The building has survived nearly seven decades of underutilization since that time, and it continues to reflect its early status as what one local paper described as the "most elaborately equipped hotel in Southeast Missouri."[11]

Elaboration

The Development of the Modern American Hotel
Prior to the 1800s, public houses, commonly known as taverns and inns, provided commercial accommodations in the United States. The buildings that housed public houses often reflected regional vernacular building styles, and, unlike the hotels of the 1800s and 1900s, did not stand out architecturally.[12] To legally operate, public houses had to be licensed by state or local officials to offer overnight lodging. The licenses, however, primarily served as a means of

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[10] The term "community hotel" was coined in the mid-1920s in hotel industry publications. John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels: Transiency and Community in the Early Auto Age* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), 51.
[11] "Charleston's New Hostelry, The Russell, Opened Last Sunday," *Poplar Bluff Republican* (Poplar Bluff, Missouri), August 8, 1918, 5.
[12] A.K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels: An American History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 16.

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enabling innkeepers to participate in the lucrative business of selling alcoholic drinks. Meals, housekeeping services, and private beds and baths were not included in the lodging price. Generally, the quality of lodging and offered amenities were secondary concerns in public houses.[13]

Initially, the term "hotel" was used interchangeably with inn, tavern, and public house. "Hotel" is of French origin and translates to "town mansion" or "a nobleman's residence."[14] In the 1790s and early 1810s, the term gradually became differentiated by the construction of the first semblances of modern hotels that were built in the northeastern cities of the U.S. The first modern hotels were built specifically to look and function differently than inns and taverns. [15] Hotels were distinguished by their combination of private guest rooms on upper floors, public spaces on lower floors, and impressive architecture and interior décor. Since public spaces in hotels were not restricted to hotel guests, hotels boosted the local economy by offering local residents spaces to gather, socialize, and host events without the exclusivity that a church or private club membership required. Along with meeting the lodging needs of guests, the first modern hotels also served as community centers, which differentiated them further from inns and taverns.[16]

Historians differ on which hotel should be considered the first modern hotel. John Jakle and Keith Sculle credit New York City's City Hotel, which opened in 1794, with being the first hotel.[17] A.K. Sandoval-Strausz states that the Union Public Hotel, which opened in 1800, in Washington D.C. was the first hotel, while Arthur White, who published an extensive history on the subject, contends that the Tremont, built in 1829 in Boston was the first.[18] In any case, those first hotels set a precedent, and innkeepers in other cities followed suit. Hotels nationwide started to implement higher hospitality and lodging standards and contributed to the growth of commercial infrastructure and trade networks in the United States.[19]

Despite the differences on which hotel was the first modern one, historians agree that the first modern hotels were a distinctly American invention.[20] With continual enhancements to hospitality and amenities, American hotels set international standards.[21] Innovations in American hotels, including electric lighting, private toilets and baths in each guest room, and high-speed elevators, were adopted worldwide. An "American Plan" for meals was also created

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[13] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels,* 16-17.
[14] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 5-6; Arthur White, *Palaces of the People: A Social History of Commercial Hospitality* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968), 129.
[15] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 20.
[16] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 6.
[17] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 6.
[18] White, *Palaces of the People,* 129; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 20-22.
[19] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 43.
[20] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 9; White, *Palaces of the People*, 129.
[21] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 6.

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during the initial development of the modern hotel industry. Under the American plan, meals were included in the price of lodging, thereby designating meals not included with lodging as the "European Plan."[22] In large and small cities, American hotels proliferated and offered the most up-to-date amenities to travelers and guests.

Another important distinction of American hotels was their reputation as "people's palaces" that symbolized democracy by welcoming the public to gather in their spaces.[23] That welcome, however, was extended primarily to white guests and locals. White hoteliers and innkeepers regularly barred African Americans from staying at their establishments throughout the 1800s.[24] When white travelers brought enslaved persons or domestic servants with them, the Black travelers in the group were commonly required to stay in segregated quarters.[25] During Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Act of 1875 attempted to address the issues of discrimination against African Americans in hotels and other public facilitates. The Supreme Court, however, deemed the act unconstitutional in 1883, and discrimination against African Americans in in the hotel industry persisted throughout the segregated Jim Crow-era until the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.[26]

Despite being barred from lodging at most white-owned hotels, African Americans were often employed in the hotel industry. African Americans primarily served as porters, cooks, elevator operators, dishwashers, wait staff, and maids, but rarely did they hold managerial or clerical positions.[27] With limited options of public accommodations and employment opportunities in the hotels, African Americans owned and operated their own inns, boarding houses, and hotels that catered to Black travelers and residents.[28] Black-owned hotels were predominantly located in major cities, but small towns with large Black populations also established lodging facilities for African Americans.[29]

Hotels and Transportation
Developments in transportation and the hotel industry are historically interconnected. Throughout the 1800s and 1900s, whenever modes of transportation changed or improved,

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[22] Lisa Pfueller Davidson, "A Service Machine": Hotel Guests and the Development of an Early-Twentieth-Century Building Type," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, 2005, Vol. 10, Building Environments (2005), 123; Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 122; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 168.

[23] Rosemarie Bletter, "Review: Palaces of the People-A Social History of Commercial Hospitality by Arthur White," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,* vol. 31 (1972), 157-158.

[24] Myra B. Young Armstead, "Revisiting Hotels and Other Lodgings: American Tourist Spaces through the Lens of Black Pleasure-Travelers, 1880-1950," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, Vol. 25, The American Hotel (2005), 139-140; Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 25; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 99.

[25] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 286.

[26] Armstead, "Revisiting Hotels and Other Lodgings," 139; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 289-292, 296-303.

[27] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 85-86.

[28] Armstead, "Revisiting Hotels and Other Lodgings," 140; Sandoval-Strauss, *Hotels*, 100.

[29] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 111.

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hotels changed too. In the early- to mid-nineteenth century, for example, steamboats, locomotives, and the establishment of rudimentary roads revolutionized the movement of goods and people.[30] Hotels developed in tandem with surges in development spurred by transportation innovations. Settlement hotels in particular helped to integrate newly-established towns into expanding commerce networks.[31] As the United States expanded westward, settlement hotels were considered an economic advantage and central to the prosperity of developing towns.[32]

As transportation networks developed and expanded, different types of hotels proliferated beginning in the 1820s and catered to specific kinds of traveling patrons. Hotels for middle-class traveling businessmen that offered basic amenities, affordable prices, and sample rooms used for conducting business and displaying wares became known as commercial hotels.[33] Hotels in urban places tailored to poor and working-class clients were often housed in converted apartments, while grand—or luxury—hotels were built specifically to cater to wealthy and predominantly white guests.[34] Resort hotels also emerged that offered upper-class clients respite from city life in remote or scenic areas. The first resort hotels were generally exclusive to white clientele, and as a result, African Americans began establishing their own resort hotels in scenic places around the U.S.[35]

In the 1850s and 1860s, rapidly expanding railroad networks changed the nature of transporting commodities and people. Transcontinental rail lines led to the establishment of the railroad hotel. Before sleeper cars were invented in the 1870s, passengers and railroad employees needed accommodation for multi-day train trips. Trains stopped in places where lodging was available, and towns along the rail lines constructed hotels to capitalize on the railroad traffic.[36] Railroad hotels were not only located near railroad stops and depots, but meals and porter services were arranged specifically around train arrivals and departures.[37]

Improvements in train travel during the second half of the nineteenth century also facilitated an increase in tourism nationwide. Since railroad hotels primarily catered to railroad employees and business travelers, hoteliers recognized the need to cater to tourists traveling by train. With the varying quality and cleanliness of railroad hotels, new hotels located alongside the tracks, such

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[30] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 47-48 and 95.
[31] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 96-97.
[32] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 3; Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, xvi.
[33] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 82 and 88.
[34] Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 86.
[35] Armstead, "Revisiting Hotels and Other Lodgings," 149.
[36] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 10-11; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotels*, 93.
[37] "Whitcomb Hotel," *Charleston Courier*, November 4, 1875; "Charleston Hotel," *Charleston Courier*, April 5, 1873, 4.

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as those in the Fred Harvey hotel chain in the American Southwest, enhanced lodging offerings and standardized service with tailored meal and accommodation options to tourists.[38]

By the early 1900s, commercial hotels modeled after those in big cities began appearing in smaller towns, a change that benefitted local economies. That development was spurred by an uptick in traveling businesspeople, a growth in the variety of guests with differing needs, and a demand for hotel accommodations with the most up-to-date conveniences that were affordable to middle-class travelers.[39] Commercial hotels, for example, started to include female-only floors, entrances, and parlors to cater to the increased number of white women who were traveling primarily for leisure.[40] Business conventions also increased during the early twentieth century, which prompted hotels to construct exhibit halls and enhanced sample rooms.[41]

"Modern commercial hotels," according to historian Lisa Pfueller Davidson, "looked for ways to gain revenue from the steady stream of visitors and locals taking advantage of the semipublic spaces of the hotel."[42] Hotel basements therefore started to include barbershops, dance floors, and billiard rooms. Hotel bars sought to attract locals as well as guests, and after Prohibition began in 1920, those spaces were converted into tearooms and coffee shops. Though many hotels in the nineteenth century incorporated multifunctional spaces within their hotel for locals and guests, they became more common in the twentieth century.[43]

With the advent of mass-produced automobiles and road improvements in the 1910s, commercial hotels began catering to guests traveling by car. Gone were the predictable guest arrival and departure times dictated by the train schedule, so hotels had to adjust their staffing and meal schedules to accommodate guests arriving at various times.[44] By 1912, hotel trade publications started to recommend that hotels include garage services Many new hotel buildings built during that time featured their own parking garages, and included separate, covered entryways to the lobby for road-weary guests to enter the hotel.[45]

Community Hotels
The Russell Hotel offers a good example of a commercial hotel variant known as a community hotel. Hotel trade publications coined the term "community hotel" in the mid-1920s to refer to

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[38] "Harvey House Railroad Depot: Barstow, California," National Park Service (accessed January 5, 2022), https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/route66/harvey_house_rr_depot_barstow.html.
[39] Gerald Lattin, quoted in Dana L. Pratt and Karen L. Kummer, "Hotel Bothwell," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, July 25, 1989, 14.
[40] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 121-123.
[41] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 120.
[42] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 123.
[43] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 113, 115-116.
[44] Lisa Pfueller Davidson, "A Service Machine": Hotel Guests and the Development of an Early-Twentieth-Century Building Type," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, 2005, Vol. 10, (2005), 120.
[45] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 120.

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architecturally-impressive buildings constructed in or near downtown areas that housed hotels financed by local civic-minded individuals and groups.[46] Community hotel buildings were often professionally-designed, tended to stand alone, and were frequently larger than most buildings in town.[47] Built with the purpose of revitalizing their communities in both an economic and social sense, community hotels served as monuments of local pride.[48]

The Russell Hotel is offered as an example of a community hotel in *America's Main Street Hotels*, a comprehensive history on the subject. Historians John Jakle and Keith Sculle use J.J. Russell, who conceived of and financed the Russell Hotel, as an example of how community hotels came about through local funding. Russell, along with public benefactors in other towns, exemplifies the joining together of civic-minded individuals and groups who regarded a quality hotel as a social and commercial asset for their town or city.

The development of community hotels like the Russell coincided with advancements in concrete road and highway developments and the continued proliferation of automobiles. As the use of railroad travel decreased, local investors believed that a quality hotel would keep their town "on the map" for commercial and leisure travelers traveling by automobile.[49] Many community hotels sought to provide first-class services at an affordable price for middle-class tourists and white-collar business and travelers.[50] New, modern hotels in small towns and cities were regarded as anchor businesses that played a significant role in a town's general prosperity by generating revenue and employment opportunities.[51]

The building of community and commercial hotels peaked in the 1920s and came to a standstill in 1929 with the stock market crash. With the onset of the Great Depression, hotels nationwide suffered financially.[52] Approximately seventy percent of hotels, for example, were in receivership by 1932.[53] Though initially beneficial to the local communities and economies, community hotels proved to be challenging to operate at a profit in the ensuing decades. They required large construction loans, paired with high operating costs, which resulted in sometimes unsustainable overhead costs.[54]

The growing competition from "motor hotels," or motels, which emerged in the mid-1920s, also adversely impacted community hotels. They developed out of autocamps that appeared along

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[46] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 51.
[47] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, xvii.
[48] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, xvii, 4, and 51-52.
[49] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 4.
[50] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 115.
[51] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 3 and 5.
[52] Davidson, "A Service Machine", 123-124.
[53] Davidson, "A Service Machine", 123-124.
[54] John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1996), 31; Jakle and Sculle*, America's Main Street Hotels*, 109 and 156.

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highways and scenic byways, which provided cheaper, but primitive overnight alternatives for travelers.[55] Motels, with lower overhead costs and smaller staffs, were often able to charge less than hotels, which heightened their popularity during the 1930s and 1940s.[56]

Motels also offered more convenient accommodations for automobile travelers.[57] With a general decline of downtown activity in small cities and towns at the time, motel-owners capitalized on the new type of travel demands that included ample parking and independence from hotel staff with customary tipping.[58] Post-World War II economic prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s brought increased highway construction and a boom in motel development. Some 61,000 motels were in operation by 1964.[59]

Early Hotels in Charleston, Missouri
Hotel development in Charleston, Missouri followed national trends. The site that became Charleston was settled by Humphrey Warren ca. 1830, who constructed a log house on the present-day corner of Center and Cypress Streets.[60] Shortly thereafter, Warren sold the house and forty acres to Thankful Randol, who continued to acquire land throughout the 1830s. In 1837, Randol sold 221 acres to Joseph Moore, who then laid out the original plat of the city of Charleston.[61] After the establishment of Charleston, Randol operated a settlement hotel there until she died.[62]

In 1845, Charleston became the county seat of Mississippi County. The county's agricultural systems used the labor of enslaved African Americans, who accounted for approximately one quarter of the population in the 1850s and early 1860s.[63] With its close proximity to the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, Charleston's early growth was also tied to river business and traffic.[64] That economic base expanded in 1853 when land in the area was

[55] Warren James Belasco*, Americans on the Road* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1979), 130-134, 140-143.
[56] Davidson, "A Service Machine", 125; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-32 and 45.
[57] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 144.
[58] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 144.
[59] Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 45.
[60] The log house is not extant. Betty Powell, *History of Mississippi County: Beginning Through 1972* (Independence, MO: BNL Library Service, 1975), 106.
[61] *History of Southeast Missouri* (Chicago: Goodspeed, 1888), 465; Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 106.
[62] The date of Thankful Randol's death is unknown. She registered her will in 1833 and registered with the Land Office twice in 1837. *History of Southeast Missouri*, 465; Powell, *History of Mississippi* County, 106.
[63] Michelle Diedriech, Amanda Burke, and Jonathan Harwood, "Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri: Site Visit and Recommendations," State History Preservation Office (Jefferson City, MO: 2013), 18-19.
[64] Joan Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County, Missouri* (Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing, 1995), 8

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targeted for railroad development by an act of Congress. After the congressional approval, citizens and politicians in and around Charleston rallied for railroad construction in their town.[65]

George Whitcomb, who had started the first Charleston newspaper, was instrumental in advocating for and securing a contract for the Cairo and Fulton Railroad to run through Charleston. In 1854, Whitcomb opened the first modern hotel, the Whitcomb Hotel, on West Commercial.[66] It is likely that Whitcomb established the hotel specifically to provide lodging accommodations to train travelers and railroad employees. It is also probable that enslaved African Americans worked at the Whitcomb Hotel because Whitcomb listed two formerly enslaved people in his will as heirs when he died in 1870, one of whom, Allen Goodin, later owned and operated a hotel in Charleston that catered to African Americans.[67]

The Cairo and Fulton Railroad opened their rail line through Charleston in 1859. Soon after, the local newspaper reported on the daily train traffic in Charleston, commenting that the trains were "well patronized," therefore suggesting that more people were coming through town with lodging needs.[68] That same year, Judge William G. Cooley opened the Charleston Hotel on the corner of Commercial and Franklin Streets.[69] That commercial hotel was described in the *Charleston Courier* as a "first class house, equal to any in the country."[70] According to the 1860 U.S. census records, the Charleston Hotel appears to have been segregated with only white patrons and staff.[71]

In 1869, the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad acquired the Cairo and Fulton Railroad.[72] After that acquisition, a new intersecting line at Charleston, the Belmont Branch, provided connections to Columbus, Kentucky and the Mobile and Ohio Railroad by way of steam ferry across the Mississippi River. The intersection bolstered Charleston's status as a regional trade center in the area, and Charleston became known as one of the most important railway hubs in

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[65] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 72-73.
[66] The Whitcomb Hotel was renamed the Kenrick Hotel in 1889 and was destroyed by fire in 1914. Powell, *History of Mississippi County,* 72-73 and 303.
[67] The name and location of Allen Goodin's hotel is unknown, but it appears in the 1900 Charleston City, Missouri census records. Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County*, 12; "1900 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[68] "Charleston Hotel," *Charleston Courier*, July 29, 1859, 2.
[69] The Charleston Hotel is not extant. It was destroyed by fire in October 1904. "1860 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022; Powell, *History of Mississippi County,* 122.
[70] "Charleston Hotel," *The Charleston Courier*, July 29, 1859, 2.
[71] "1860 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[72] M. Patricia Holmes, "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston," National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, November 30, 1972, 3.

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southeast Missouri.[73] Local hotels recognized the commercial benefits associated with increased rail traffic and offered free transportation and luggage services to entice potential customers.[74]

As was the case in other cities, Charleston hotels ensured their accommodations were up-to-date, and renovations were routinely announced or advertised in local newspapers. In 1865, for example, the *Charleston Courier* reported that the new owner of the Charleston Hotel, Lewis W. Danforth, thoroughly renovated the hotel and added a bar stocked with the finest alcohol and cigars.[75] Two years later, the Charleston Hotel changed owners again and the new proprietor, B.G. McElmurry, announced that the hotel had been "refitted in every department" and that travelers will "find every comfort and convenience as is generally found in the large city hotels."[76]

The only other major hotel in town at that time, the Whitcomb Hotel, then operated by Joseph Courtway, was praised in the local newspaper in 1869 for its renovations, establishing such a good reputation, and having quality food offerings for locals and guests. The *Charleston Courier* even likened the Whitcomb to a sort of resort hotel by reporting that the "building is large, with beautiful shaded grounds, and one of the most inviting retreats we know of in the surrounding country for those who may desire to spend a day or week in a quiet 'country town.'"[77] The hotel catered to white patrons, as evidenced by the all-white list of boarders at the Whitcomb in the 1870 census. The census also shows that Courtway employed at least four African Americans at the Whitcomb, all of whom also lived at the hotel.[78]

Although few Charleston hotels offered lodging for African Americans, they did often provide employment. Hotel Fletcher, owned and operated by Eliza Fletcher, employed one African American man, William James, as a porter, while the other employees and boarders listed at the Fletcher Hotel were white. Starting in 1870, there are other African Americans in Charleston census reports who were listed as working at hotels, but it is unclear which hotels employed them.[79]

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[73] Holmes, "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 3; Powell*, History of Mississippi County*, 110.

[74] "Whitcomb Hotel," *Charleston Courier*, November 4, 1875; "Charleston Hotel," *Charleston Courier*, April 5, 1873, 4.

[75] B.G. McElmurry renamed the Charleston Hotel to the Prairie House in 1865, but the name change was brief. "Charleston Hotel," *Charleston Courier,* September 29, 1865, 6.

[76] "Prairie House, Charleston, MO," *Charleston Courier*, March 2, 1867, 4.

[77] "The Whitcomb Hotel at Charleston," *Charleston Courier*, July 2, 1869, 2.

[78] "1870 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

[79] "1870-1880 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

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Black-owned hotels were generally located in major cities, but with the high percentage of African Americans in Charleston, there appears to have been at least one to two in operation until the 1930s.[80] As beforementioned, Allen Goodin, a formerly enslaved person held by George Whitcomb (of the Whitcomb Hotel), operated a hotel staffed with Black employees.[81] Pear Lee, an African-American woman, also operated a hotel in Charleston in 1900 with an all-Black staff.[82] Interestingly, Goodin's and Lee's hotels each listed two white females as boarders in the 1900 census.[83] In 1910, Mollie Cruse, an African American woman, is listed as owning a boarding house for Black patrons at 339 Air Line Road.[84] All the staff and boarders are listed as African-American.[85]

It is unclear as to what extent the Black-owned hotels served as centers for Charleston's African American community. Local newspapers primarily reported on white-owned hotels and how they functioned as social and civic spaces for the white community of Charleston. The Whitcomb Hotel, for example, was the site of socials and dances with local bands, either hosted by the hotel or by community groups and clubs.[86] Lewis W. Danforth, who had operated the Charleston Hotel, opened the Commercial Hotel in 1881 with a "grand ball and supper" was given for the local community.[87] The *St. Louis Dispatch* reported that the Hotel Kenrick—previously known as the Whitcomb Hotel—was the final site for of a procession held for a Missouri gubernatorial candidate who visited Charleston in 1888.[88]

Hotels, like other business ventures, were subject to economic boom and bust periods, and several early hotels in Charleston were short-lived. (See Figure 10. Charleston Hotels.) The Commercial Hotel, for example, was closed by 1885, and the Hotel Fletcher and Hotel Swain came and went quickly.[89] The Heggie Hotel, a railroad hotel, opened near the train depot in 1893, but appears to have closed shortly thereafter during an economic slump.[90] Fires also

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[80] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 111.

[81] Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County*, 12. "1900 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

[82] The location of Pear Lee's hotel is unknown, but evidence of the hotel appears in the 1900 census records. "1900 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

[83] "1900 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

[84] The building that housed Cruse's hotel at 339 Air Line Road and Air Line Road in general cannot be located, suggesting that it is no longer extant. Google Earth (accessed February 2022), https://www.google.com/maps/search/339+Air+Line+Road+Charleston,+MO/@36.9137035,-89.3492156,14z/data=!3m1!4b1.

[85] "1910 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

[86] "Social Dance and Refreshments," *Charleston Courier*, February 22, 1868, 3.

[87] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 111.

[88] "Charleston, Mo," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 19, 1888, 3.

[89] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 118.

[90] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 114.

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caused hotels to shut down, as was the case with the Hotel Loflin in 1896 and the Southern Hotel in 1897.[91] The Charleston Hotel, then the town's second oldest hotel, burnt in 1904 and never re-opened. The oldest hotel, the Whitcomb Hotel/Hotel Kenrick, at 108-110 West Commercial, was destroyed by fire in 1914 while undergoing remodeling.[92]

One of Charleston's longest-operating commercial hotels, the Mitchell Hotel, was constructed in 1898 at 202 West Commercial. In 1902, an expansion of the hotel increased the capacity to fifty rooms.[93] Since the Mitchell Hotel was open contemporaneously with the Russell, it is discussed in a comparative context in the following section. The building that housed the Mitchell was razed during Urban Renewal in ca. 1975.[94]

Creation of the Russell Hotel
Joseph J. Russell, born in 1854 and raised in Charleston, was a prominent lawyer and politician who conceived of and co-financed the Russell Hotel. Known as one of the ablest lawyers in southeast Missouri, Russell had a successful and lucrative law firm, and he served as the prosecuting attorney for Mississippi County from 1880 to 1884.[95] In 1886, he was elected to represent Mississippi County in the state legislature and served in that position until 1890. Russell also served five terms as the U.S. congressional representative from Missouri's 14th district in 1907-1909 and again in 1911-1919.[96]

Russell was an active member of the Charleston community. In the 1880s and 1890s, he helped organize and then served as the director of the Charleston Bank, assisted in the establishment of an electric light plant which provided electric streetlights in town, and helped in civic improvements projects like creating an irrigation ditch and establishing the first telephone line in Charleston in his office. He also helped establish the Charleston Baptist College and was a charter member of the Charleston Baptist Church.[97] In 1907, he financed the building of a large, two-story building with modern amenities at the time including steam heat, hot water, and tiled floors.[98] The building, located on the southeast corner of Main and Court Streets, housed his law office and other local businesses and is still extant.

In 1916, Russell attended a banquet in Charleston, and it was there that the idea for a new hotel in town came to fruition. Someone at the banquet suggested that Charleston needed a "fine hotel."[99] Russell almost immediately volunteered to finance the endeavor if those interested in

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[91] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 119-120.
[92] Powell, *History of Mississippi County,* 122 and 303.
[93] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 303.
[94] Powell, *History of Mississippi County,* 303.
[95] *History of Southeast Missouri,* 998-999.
[96] "Russell, Joseph James, 1854-1922," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, Office of the House Historian, https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/R000533 (accessed January 2022).
[97] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 134, 136, 206, 224, and 300.
[98] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 122.
[99] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.

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the hotel project, as Charleston's *Enterprise-Courier* later reported, "would purchase a suitable site, retaining the amount of their investment in stock. This proposition was immediately accepted, and within twenty-four hours such a company was formed."[100] Within forty-eight hours of Russell's proposal, the newly-formed hotel company purchased a lot at First and Commercial Streets with $7,000 subscribed by twenty-eight local businessmen.[101]

Russell served as the primary stockholder of the company and oversaw the planning and construction of the hotel without charge.[102] For the major contributions of J.J. Russell in its creation and construction, Russell's friends recommended that the hotel be called, "The Joe Russell," and the local newspaper referred to it as such throughout 1917. At some point, the hotel was officially named the Russell Hotel.[103]

The local newspaper reported that plans for the Russell Hotel began in March of 1917.[104] The architect for the new building appears to have been determined via a design contest between three architects from nearby towns. The plans were to "embody the very latest conveniences in hotel construction," as the *Enterprise-Courier* reported, namely fireproof materials, a barber shop, billiard room, writing rooms, a ladies' parlor and separate entrance, a large dining room, commodious lobby, and private baths in at least half of the rooms.[105]

Architectural Significance
Russell chose a design submitted by William E. Parlow, an architect based in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Parlow worked as a contractor early in his career and later became a self-taught architect. He lived and worked in Osceola, Arkansas for many years and spent the last seven years of his architectural career in Cape Girardeau.[106] The Russell Hotel was one of Parlow's last major commissions; he died unexpectedly on July 20, 1920.[107] Parlow specialized in civic and commercial buildings, but also designed at least one large residence, the J. L. Byrd House in Charleston. Most of his later commissions were in Cape Girardeau, including a still extant commercial building for the Buckner-Ragsdale Company, which was headed by W. B. Ragsdale. (See Figure 11. Buildings Designed by W. E. Parlow.) Ragsdale also owned a store in Charleston and was one of the primary subscribers in the Russell Hotel company.

Parlow worked with a wide variety of building types. Buildings attributed to him include schools, a theater, commercial buildings, a train station, a post office, and the courthouse in Mississippi

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[100] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.
[101] "New $50,000 Hotel to Be Built Here," *Enterprise-Courier*, March 22, 1917, 1.
[102] "New $50,000 Hotel to Be Built Here," *Enterprise-Courier*, March 22, 1917, 1.
[103] "New $50,000 Hotel to Be Built Here," *Enterprise-Courier*, March 22, 1917, 1.
[104] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.
[105] "Building of $50,000 Hotel Not Delayed," *Enterprise-Courier*, March 29, 1917, 1.
[106] "W.E. Parlow Dead," *Osceola Times (Osceola, Arkansas)* July 9, 1920, 1.
[107] Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel."

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County, Arkansas.[108] One of his first commissions in Cape Girardeau was the design of a large addition to the Hotel Idan-Ha, experience that no doubt aided his work on the Russell Hotel. Although he worked in a variety of styles that were popular at the time, he clearly favored styles based on classical or colonial precedents. Styling of his known designs ranged from the elaborate Classical Revival of the county courthouse in Osceola, Arkansas to much simpler massing and ornament on schools or commercial buildings such as the Washington School or Buckner-Ragsdale Building in Cape Girardeau. (See Figure 11.)

For the Russell Hotel, Parlow used design attributes most frequently associated with the Colonial Revival style, which first became popular around 1870 and remained in vogue, particularly for houses, into the 1950s.[109] Colonial Revival, sometimes referred to as Georgian Revival or Neo-Georgian, features symmetrical compositions and simple massing, with classically derived systems of ornamentation that were popular in the American Colonial period.[110] Red brick is a favored wall material and entryways are often accented with classically derived embellishments such as pediments, entablatures, and pilasters or columns.[111] Colonial Revival style buildings generally have simpler forms and more restrained systems of ornamentation than Classical Revival or Beaux Arts Classicism, which were also popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The two street-facing elevations of the Russell Hotel feature symmetrical fenestration and classically inspired terra cotta ornamentation that is glazed to emulate stone. Both walls have large cornices, with narrow bands of molding between stories, and the windows are topped with stepped jack arches that feature centered keystones. The oversized entrance on the west wall has a particularly notable classical surround, with Tuscan pilasters topped by a simple entablature and a shallow pediment ornamented with foliated anthemion ornaments that are based on ancient Greek models. Interior spaces in the hotel are also typical of the Colonial Revival style, especially on the first floor. The lobby and dining room both have beamed ceilings and millwork which has clean lines and simple ornament such as egg and dart molding.

The Russell Hotel is the only known historic commercial example of the Colonial Revival style in Charleston. There are in fact very few classically influenced commercial buildings of any age or genre in Charleston today. A windshield survey of buildings in the commercial center identified just three other early twentieth century buildings with classical composition and ornamentation. (Figure 12. Local Comparative Properties.) Interestingly enough, one of the best local examples

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[108] Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel," *Southeast Missourian: From the Morgue* (Cape Girardeau, MO), July 17, 2018, accessed 2021, and "W. E. Parlow Dead."

[109] Cyril. M. Harris, *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2006), 230, and Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2015), 409-404.

[110] Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), 159-160.

[111] Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture*, (New York: Plume Books, 1980), 221.

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was also built for J. J. Russell. That two-story brick commercial building was constructed in 1907 at the corner of Main and Court Streets. It was designed by St. Louis architect J.B. Legg, using restrained Beaux Arts styling.[112] In a 2013 Site Visit Report for Charleston that was prepared by the staff of the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, the Russell Hotel and the Russell Office building were among only four commercial buildings identified as possibly individually eligible for listing in the National Register. Neither of the others utilize Colonial Revival or Classical Revival styling.[113]

The other two local examples of classical detailing were not specifically mentioned in that report. One of the largest historic commercial buildings in downtown Charleston, located at Main and Commercial Streets, features Classical Revival styling. That three-story building has a heavy cornice, with rows of monumental pilasters along both street-facing walls, and two large arched windows. That building has seen several exterior changes that impact historic integrity, including first floor infill, changes to the size and shape of window openings on the upper floors, and what appears to be modern stucco wall covering. The third local example is a large two-story brick commercial building that exhibits only vaguely classical massing and ornamentation. It is located at Main and First Streets. That five-bay building has a horizontal composition, a small, molded cornice, and small stone ornaments. It has seen few major exterior alterations.

All three local buildings described above use the common commercial building form known as a Two-part Commercial Block, which features open commercial space on the first floor and less public areas such as offices or residences on the upper floors.[114] Two-Part Commercial blocks, including the ones mentioned above, are frequently built side by side along commercial street frontages. The Russell Hotel, by contrast, was designed to serve as a standalone hotel.

Hotel Construction: Creating a Community Hotel
Russell also selected George Gassman, a local contractor, to oversee what was supposed to be a $60,000 construction project. Gassman was no stranger to the hotel business; he was a former owner of the local Hotel Kenrick, which was destroyed by fire in 1914 during a building enlargement project. A Poplar Bluff, Missouri newspaper noted that Russell and Gassman aimed to "make this the most imposing hotel in Southeast Missouri."[115] By July 1917, just five months after the project was conceived, the building's foundation was completed, and bricklayers began work in early August of that year. As was the case for previous hotels, Black labor played a role in the construction of the Russell Hotel. In a photo that captured the building's early construction, there are at least eight African-Americans working on the hotel. (See Figure 13. Russell Hotel Construction.)

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[112] Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 122.
[113] Michelle Diedriech, et. al. "Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri. Site Visit Report and Recommendations" (Jefferson City: Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 2013).
[114] Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*, (New York: Alta Mira Press, 2000), 24.
[115] "Charleston Contractor is Low Bidder on $60,000 Hotel," *Poplar Bluff Republican*, June 28, 1917, 2.

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Shortly after the foundation was laid, Russell and Gassman encountered a large, unforeseen cost increase due to what Russell called "war prices," or supply shortages due to World War I.[116] To help cover the cost increase, local businessmen pledged an additional $7,800, for which Russell published a thank you letter in the local paper.[117] In September 1917, the construction of the Russell Hotel received national attention in *Hotel World*, a prominent hotel trade publication at the time.[118] Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, national hotel industry publications including *Hotel World* and *Hotel Monthly* increasingly highlighted hotels in small towns and cities, which further accentuated a hotel's economic and social status in their communities.[119]

From the outset, the Russell Hotel was intended to be a monument of community pride. Russell established the hotel, according to the *Enterprise-Courier*, "more from the standpoint of providing a good hotel and show place for Charleston than for the financial considerations."[120] In local and regional newspapers, the building that housed the Russell was described as elegant, handsome, and elaborate.[121] "It is a strong structure," the *Enterprise-Courier* later proclaimed, "reaching broadly for the sky," which reflected the Russell's symbolic and actual place in the community.[122]

The Russell Hotel reflected the prosperous three decades that Charleston had experienced as an important railroad town from 1880s to the 1910s, and also represented the changes that were prompted by mass-produced automobiles in the late 1910s. The hotel, for example, was planned and constructed during a spate of road improvement in and around Charleston. Following the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, which was the first highway funding legislation, Mississippi County was one of the first counties in Missouri to accept federal and matching state funds in the construction of a concrete road between Charleston and Bird's Point. Just three years later, that road became the longest stretch of concrete highway in Missouri. Charleston residents also independently helped to improve roads in the area, and in 1917, the *Enterprise-Courier* commented on a "first class road out of Charleston."[123]

It is likely that Russell and his partners recognized the need to appeal to automobile travelers. Two commercial garages, no longer extant, were located near the Russell in 1919, one directly across the street from the hotel and the other on the north end of the block on the corner of First

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[116] "Russell Thanks Hotel Committee," *Courier-Enterprise,* August 2, 1917, 1.

[117] "Russell Thanks Hotel Committee," *Courier-Enterprise,* August 2, 1917, 1.

[118] "Charleston, Mo.," *Hotel World*, September 1, 1917, 51.

[119] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 25-26.

[120] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.

[121] Charleston's New Hostelry," *Poplar Bluff Republican*, August 8, 1918, 5; "J.E. Fenwick to Manage New Hotel," *Perry County Republican* (Perryville, Missouri), November 22, 1917, 1.

[122] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier* (Charleston, MO), August 17, 1989, 12.

[123] Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County,* 22.

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and Court Streets.[124] A ca. 1920s postcard of the Russell featured automobiles parked outside the hotel, and by 1927, a filling station had been built just east of the hotel.[125] (See Figures 3 and 4.) With those automobile services nearby, the Russell was in a good position to accommodate travelers by car, which by the end of the 1920s was approximately sixty to eighty-five percent of guests nationwide.[126]

Opening of the Russell Hotel
Openings of community hotels like the Russell were significant for residents and often came with galas and dedications. When the Russell Hotel opened in August 1918, however, the grand opening was postponed due to J.J. Russell's health. Russell had suffered a stroke of paralysis in Washington D.C. earlier in 1918 and was still too ill to travel. While recovering at a sanitarium in Atlantic City, Russell missed the hotel's opening.[127] A planned grand opening with an appearance by U.S. House of Representative Speaker of the House Champ Clark was postponed for a later time but depended upon the improvement of Russell's health.[128]

Despite Russell's illness and a postponed opening ceremony, the Russell Hotel still opened with much local fanfare. The *Enterprise-Courier* featured a multi-page article on the opening, reporting that:

> Over two-hundred guests, including many from out-of-town, were registered Sunday at the opening of the new $125,000 hotel which Congressman Joseph J. Russell has given to this, his home city. There were many compliments on the excellent cuisine, the splendid dining-room service, and especially were the guests delighted with the beautiful furnishings and interior finish of the handsome building…Charleston can claim without fear of contradiction the title to finest hostelry in Southeast Missouri.[129]

Hotel Monthly, another national hotel industry publication, also covered the opening of the Russell.[130] Articles in *Hotel Monthly* and the local newspaper described the hotel in detail, pointing out particular modern conveniences such as private baths in half of the forty-two rooms, a built-in ice box that provided cold water to the dining room and lobby through coiled pipes, the beauty of the dining room décor, and the quality of the beds that contained "the best springs and felt mattresses that money could buy."[131] The articles also emphasized that the building

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[124] "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Charleston, Missouri," Sanborn Map Company, 1919.
[125] "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Charleston, Missouri," Sanborn Map Company, 1919 and 1927.
[126] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 120.
[127] "Congressman Russell Will Not Vote This Election for First Time in Thirty Years," *Enterprise-Courier* (date unknown).
[128] It does not appear as though a formal dedication or grand opening occurred due to Russell's declining health. "Champ Clark to Dedicate Big Hotel in Charleston," *The Weekly Tribune* (Cape Girardeau, Missouri), March 8, 1918, 2; "Charleston's New Hostelry," *Poplar Bluff Republican*, August 8, 1918, 5.
[129] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.
[130] "The Russell of Charleston, MO.," *Hotel Monthly*, vol. 26, no. 298, January 1918, 61.
[131] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918, 1.

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was "fireproof," which was a new selling point nationally at the time.[132] It was also locally important since at least the last four of the city's earlier hotels had been destroyed by fire.

The *Enterprise-Courier* feature on the hotel's opening also included a section titled, "Will Be Social Center." Along with endeavoring "to place the Russell at the head of the list of modern Southeast Missouri hotels," the Russell's management noted that they encouraged "the cooperation of the businessmen of the community and invites them to use the place for club meetings, banquets, public receptions, etc., whenever they desire to do so."[133] Residents were cordially invited to attend luncheons, special dinner services throughout the week, and supper dances. Under the headline, "The Russell—Your Hotel," the first advertisement for the hotel read: "You're invited and urged, to feel that this is your hotel."[134] Although it is not explicit in the ads, the invitations were aimed at white travelers and the white community of Charleston, which was customary during the segregated Jim Crow-era in the U.S.

The first advertisement for the Russell urging locals to frequent the hotel was written by the manager, J.E. Fenwick. Fenwick was experienced in the hotel industry, first at the Idan-ha Hotel in Cape Girardeau for four years and then at the leading hotel in Perryville.[135] Fenwick was hired by Russell while the hotel was in construction. *Hotel World and local newspapers* reported on the hiring of Fenwick and noted that he had spent several months at the beginning of 1918 at the Statler Hotel in St. Louis where he received training in the "modern system of hotel management."[136] The modern hotel management system, also known as the "scientific management" method, was created by Frederick Winslow Taylor and popularized by the prominent Statler Hotel chain.[137] It, in essence, applied mass production principles of simplification and efficiency while also prioritizing the differing requests of guests.[138] It is likely that Fenwick implemented that system at the Russell when the hotel opened.

Commercial Impact
The Russell, like other hotels in both small and large cities, were businesses that brought money into the community and provided employment opportunities for locals. Hotels, as the president of one prominent hotel company stated, were "a double assert to a city" because guests not only spent money at the hotel, but they also patronized other businesses in town including restaurants, stores, and auto shops.[139] The Russell, like other commercial and

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[132] "The Russell of Charleston, MO.," *Hotel Monthly*, vol. 26, no. 298, January 1918, 61; "New $50,000 Hotel to Be Built Here," *Enterprise-Courier*, March 22, 1917, 1.
[133] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.
[134] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.
[135] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918.
[136] "Charleston's New $125,000 Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 8, 1918; "Fenwick," *Hotel World*, December 8, 1917, 18.
[137] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 114.
[138] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 52.
[139] *Official Hotel Red Book and Directory*, Annual Publication of the American Hotel Association of the United States and Canada (1935), 115.

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community hotels, also sought to attract locals by offering a variety of restaurant and dining services.[140]

The Russell also generated revenue by hosting conventions, which were particularly beneficial for the local economy. Conventions exponentially increased nationwide, with some 4,000 in 1920, a number that doubled by 1930.[141] "Money flowed," as one account noted, and "business flourished" for hotels when they hosted a convention.[142] The Russell was the site of several meetings and gatherings for different civic and commercial groups. One of the first conventions at the Russell was hosted in September 1919 by the Southwest Missouri Retail Lumber Dealer's Association. The group's convention at the Russell was, according to the *Southern Lumberman,* "one of the most successful gatherings in the history of the organization."[143] J.J. Russell, who served as keynote speaker, was praised for an eloquent and entertaining speech, which appears to have been one of his last public appearances.[144]

The Russell, with early rates of $2.75 to $3.50 per night, was priced on average with other hotels at the time that catered to middle- and upper-class travelers.[145] With six trains going in and out of town at that time, Charleston had three hotels that catered specifically to train traffic including the Terminal Hotel near the depot, the Baker House on South Main and Pecan Streets, and the Cottage Hotel on West Market.[146] (Figure 10.) The Mitchell Hotel catered mostly to white railroad workers, as Melissa Graham, a lifelong resident of Charleston, said in a recent oral history interview.[147] Graham also mentioned that the Mitchell Hotel was "not as classy of a place" as the Russell, which suggests that the Mitchell and the Russell tailored their accommodations to different clientele.[148] For Charleston's large Black population and Black travelers, Emma Sigow, an African American woman, operated a hotel at 210 S. Elm Street in the 1920s. All the boarders and employees listed for Sigow's hotel in the 1920 census report were African American.[149]

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[140] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 122 and 123.

[141] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 108-110; Davidson, "A Service Machine," 119-120, and 128.

[142] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 109.

[143] "Missouri Retail Dealers Hold Semiannual Meeting," *Southern Lumberman*, September 6, 1919, 30.

[144] "Missouri Retail Dealers Hold Semiannual Meeting," *Southern Lumberman*, September 6, 1919, 30.

[145] "A Hotel Renovation," *Enterprise-Courier,* June 30, 1977, 16; Robert Krzak, "Trends in the Hospitality Industry: Hotels," Gecko Hospitality (accessed February 2022), https://www.geckohospitality.com/2017/01/04/trends-hospitality-industry-hotels/.

[146] Mildred Reeves Burnett, *Charleston Had It All* (Morley, MO: Acclaim Press, 2013), 304.

[147] Oral history interview with Melissa Graham, January 10, 2022, interview by author.

[148] Oral history interview with Melissa Graham, January 10, 2022, interview by author.

[149] Sigow's hotel, as noted above, was located at 210 S. Elm Street. There is no corresponding building or residence associated with that address on Google Maps or Sanborn Maps. The closest address is a modern residence at 202 S. Elm Street. "1920 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.

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During the first year in operation, J.J. Russell's health continued to decline. The formal opening ceremony never came to pass, and Russell was unable to take an active role in the daily hotel operations. As a result, the hotel was leased to three different parties during the first year it was open.[150] In April 1919, W.H. Gamble took over the Russell from a corporation who had leased the hotel from Russell.[151] The local newspaper also reported that the first two parties could not "make a financial success of the undertaking because of the large overhead involved."[152] The *Enterprise-Courier* reported that while community members had "appreciated the investment Congressman Russell had made for the city, most felt that too much money had been tied up for the enterprise to ever be successful."[153]

Marable Family Ownership, 1921-1953
John R. Marable, the third person to lease the hotel during its first year of operation, brought much-needed stability to the business. Marable had a solid background in hotel management when he took over the Russell in 1919. Originally from Tennessee, John Marable moved to Parma, Missouri in 1908 to help open a hotel with his uncle. He and his family then moved to Malden, Missouri, where they owned and operated a hotel for six years before moving to Charleston.[154] In June of 1921, Marable purchased the hotel from J.J. Russell for, as one newspaper reported, "less than fifty cents on the dollar."[155] In October of 1922, Russell, who never fully recovered from the illness that had struck him before the hotel's opening, died while residing in the hotel with his wife.[156]

Like the other parties who tried to take over the hotel, Marable initially found the Russell Hotel to be a challenge. "The first years were trying ones for the Marables," a local newspaper stated, on "coming to Charleston, they found hardly a person who would even consider the business would be profitable and that Mr. Marable would stay."[157] John Marable was helped by his family in running the hotel, and they were able to, as one travel writer commented, make it a "splendid success, a money maker for himself as well as a real asset for the excellent city of Charleston."[158]

1920 census record show that the Marables and some staff lived at the hotel. The porter in 1920 was Melvin Armstrong, an African American who had worked for the Marables in Malden.

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[150] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[151] "Leases Russell Hotel," *The Democrat-Argus* (Caruthersville, Missouri), April 8, 1919, 1.
[152] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[153] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[154] *Houston County, Tennessee, History and Families* (Turner Publishing: 1995), 135.
[155] "Charleston Hotel Sold," *Sikeston Standard*, June 14, 1921; "Over the Skyline of the Ozarks," *Farmington Times* (St. Francois County, Missouri), August 25, 1922, 1.
[156] "Former Congressman Russell, Veteran Public Servant, Dies," *Southwest Mail and The Weekly Post* (Nevada, Missouri), October 27, 1922, 6.
[157] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[158] "Over the Skyline of the Ozarks," *Farmington Times,* August 25, 1922, 1.

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It is likely that he moved to Charleston specifically to work for the Marables at the Russell.[159] Armstrong was one of three employees who lived at the Russell, the other two were white women who served as a waitress and chambermaid at the hotel.[160] At that time, the Russell appears to be one of the only hotels in town with an integrated staff. Census entries for the Mitchell Hotel and another hotel, most likely the Terminal Hotel, located near the railroad depot only list white employees and boarders.[161] It is possible that other white-owned Charleston hotels employed African Americans, but it is not clear in the census records. In her oral history, Graham remembers that most of the waiters at the Russell were African American when she frequented the hotel as a child, which suggests that African Americans were employed, but not necessarily welcomed as guests at the hotel from the 1920s to at least the late 1950s.[162]

Throughout the 1920s, the Marables kept the Russell Hotel up-to-date with renovations and different strategies that invited residents to the hotel. The Russell also continued to host regional conferences, like the meeting of the Missouri Bankers Association in 1922, which was reported in *Chicago Banker*.[163] George Marable, John Marable's son who served first as the hotel clerk and later as the manager, said that they put up the first neon sign in Charleston on the hotel in the mid-1920s as shown in the ca. 1920s postcard. (Figure 4.)[164] At that time, hotel postcards like the ones the Marables created were a new mode of marketing that invited guests to, in a way, help advertise the hotel by mailing them or keeping them as souvenirs.[165]

In 1929, with the crash of the stock market and the start of the Great Depression, the hotel industry, which had been booming in the 1920s, came to a standstill. Hotels had been overbuilt during the 1910s and 1920s, especially in small towns and cities that overinvested in elaborate hotels. A 1935 study, furthermore, showed hotel occupancy had dropped approximately sixty percent from its 1929 peak, and rates had dropped about thirty percent.[166]

Diversification During the Depression
The exact financial impact that the Depression had on the Russell is not clear, but as one account of Mississippi County history notes, "low farm prices, unemployment, bankruptcies, and bank failures became common" in the area during the 1930s.[167] During the Depression, social

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[159] "Melvin Armstrong, U.S., World War I Draft Registration, 1917-1918" and "1920 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[160] "Melvin Armstrong, U.S., World War I Draft Registration, 1917-1918" and "1920 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[161] "1920 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[162] Oral history interview with Melissa Graham, January 10, 2022, interview by author.
[163] "Group Six on Record," *Chicago Banker* (September 1922), 10.
[164] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 17, 1989, 12.
[165] Keith Sculle and John Jakle, "The American Hotel in Postcard Advertising," *Material Culture*, International Society for Landscape, Place, and Material Culture, 2005, 1.
[166] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels*, 108.
[167] Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County*, 26.

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events at the Russell helped offset lower revenue from room rentals.[168] In 1930, George Marable hosted, as the *Sikeston Standard* reported, "one of the largest public dances given in [Charleston] in many years and the outstanding social event of this Christmas season" at the Russell.[169] Local and regional newspapers show that the Russell continued to host luncheons and parties in the early 1930s.[170]

After Prohibition ended in the early 1930s, hotels reinstated their bars and alcohol sales, which helped further in diversifying their income during the Depression.[171] In 1933, George Marable converted the basement of the Russell into a music and dance hall and named it "The Cellar." Regional newspapers called it "a Southeast Missouri night club" and reported that the "hotel basement has been completely rearranged, redecorated and prepared to house the new idea in novel entertainment."[172]

The Cellar established a good reputation and a regional draw. Throughout the 1930s, it was, as a 1937 article noted, "one of the finest dance halls in Southeast Missouri." [173] The same article reported that "some of the finest orchestras in the country play at the Cellar."[174] Newspapers covered prominent bands that played at the Cellar, including the Egyptian Serenaders of Cairo, Illinois, the composer of the 'St. Louis Blues,' W.C. Handy and His Orchestra of Memphis, and Lee Cannon.[175] A *St. Louis Star and Times* writer, who hailed from Charleston, even went so far as to claim that St. Louis did not "have many places that outclass The Cellar."[176] In *Charleston Had It All,* Mildred Reeves Burnett summarizes the importance of the Russell in the community:

> For many years, 'The Russell' was the hot spot to go. The Cellar was quite popular, and the dining room as well. After work, men scurried down the steps, heading for the Cellar. Once inside, chatting began. Especially during holidays, citizens danced to the music of noted orchestras.[177]

Around the same time, a coffee shop was opened in the Russell. It was named the Marable Coffee Shop and offered hot and cold beverages, tobacco, and sandwiches. In one article, George Marable said that he bought the first soda fountain in Charleston.[178] A "Coffee" sign is visible on the 1930s Russell Hotel postcard that included the following advertisement on the back: "Have You Stopped in the Russell Hotel lately? Try the new 'Coffee Shop' for sure, and

[168] "Local and Personal from Charleston," *Sikeston Standard* (Sikeston, Missouri), October 10, 1930, 3.
[169] "Local and Personal from Charleston," *Sikeston Standard,* December 26, 1930, 4.
[170] "Local and Personal from Charleston," *Sikeston Standard,* October 10, 1930, 3.
[171] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 123-124.
[172] "Charleston Night Club 'The Cellar' to Open Next Tuesday, April 18," *Sikeston Standard*, April 14, 1933, p. 5.
[173] Burnett, *Charleston Had It All,* 303.
[174] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[175] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 17, 1989, 12.
[176] "'Round the Town with Regan," *The St. Louis Star and Times*, December 22, 1938, 23.
[177] Burnett, *Charleston Had It All*, 304.
[178] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 17, 1989, 12.

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'The Cellar' is swell for snacks and dancing while you enjoy a refreshing drink."[179] (See Figure 4.)

In 1937, the Russell was thoroughly renovated, which reflects a national trend that year. As the economy rebounded from the Depression, hoteliers reportedly spent $137 million on improvements in 1937.[180] The *Charleston Democrat* featured a front-page article about the Russell's renovation. "New upholstery has been secured for the lobby," the newspaper reported, "and the rooms have all been repainted and redecorated, new draperies and rugs have been installed, as well as Venetian blinds. The dining room where regular meals and a la carte service is to be had is really a show place with its new decorating features."[181] The Marables were praised in the article for maintaining a good reputation for the hotel and for it being, even twenty years after its opening, "truly one of the show places of Charleston."[182]

Regional and local newspapers covered events at the Russell throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. The Russell Hotel was the site of many civic and commercial activities including politically-active groups and conferences with civic and business leaders. The Russell also hosted banquets for high school athletics and tournaments. In 1952, a Sikeston newspaper reported on the annual interstate checker tournament between Illinois and Missouri high school players. The article noted that the Russell provided such satisfactory service that "it was decided the match each year would be played in Charleston at the Russell Hotel."[183] The Cellar and Marable Coffee Shop continued to bolster income for the hotel, and ads for dancing and music at the Cellar, along with meal and coffee specials, appeared in regional newspapers until at least 1953.[184] (See Figures 14 and 15.)

The Russell also appears to have served long-term renters in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1940 census, seven white boarders are listed as residing on the top floor.[185] A 1951 newspaper article noted that a couple, one of whom played the organ at the Russell, lived in the hotel.[186] Graham, whose family temporarily resided at the hotel in the late 1950s, remembers other long-term residents at the hotel.[187]

In 1950, John Marable died and willed the Russell to his son, George, and his daughter, Mrs. Pauline Adams. In 1953, Robert Foster, a prominent businessman in Sikeston, leased the hotel from the Marables. Foster planned to change the hotel's name to the Charleston Hotel and the

[179] Davidson, "A Service Machine," 123.
[180] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels,* 141.
[181] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[182] "Russell Hotel is Showplace in Charleston City," *Charleston Democrat*, September 9, 1937, 1.
[183] "Missourians Win Checker Matches," *Daily Standard* (Sikeston, Missouri), February 26, 1952, 3.
[184] Various ads in the *Daily Standard*, 1951-1953.
[185] "1940 U.S. Census Records, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri," Ancestry.com, accessed January 2022.
[186] "Chandler-Kelly," *Daily Standard* (Sikeston, Missouri), December 14, 1951, 5.
[187] Oral history interview with Melissa Graham, January 10, 2022, interview by author.

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Cellar's name to the Blue Jay Inn, but those plans do not appear to have been realized.[188] News reports show that Foster was in legal trouble in 1955, which probably contributed to the dissolution of Foster's plans. As a result, the Marables continued to operate the hotel.

In her oral history interview, Graham explained that while she and her family lived in the Russell for a month in 1958 or 1959, Pauline Adams and her husband were still operating the hotel and were living in an apartment that had replaced the sample rooms at that time. The Russell was also a place that many Charleston residents, including Graham and her family, went to on Sunday afternoons in their best outfits. She recalled that the Russell had a special atmosphere, confirming its function as commercial staple in the local economy well into the 1950s and early 1960s.[189]

By the mid-1960s, the Russell stopped functioning as a hotel. A *Enterprise-Courier* article that mentioned the end of the hotel's management by the Marable family stated that "the passing of the Marables from the Russell Hotel scene, will, we're told, bring to many fond memories of the 20s when the hotel's dining was southeast Missouri's most-sought-after place for the social activities of the day."[190] The Russell was far from the only community hotel to close by the 1960s. Hotels declined with increased competition from motels, many of which offered more convenient and cheaper accommodations for automobile travelers with lower overhead costs.[191]

Post-Hotel History: ca. 1965-1990s
The building that housed the Russell changed owners and functions several times from the mid-1960s until the 2010s. In 1966, the newly-charted Mississippi County Historical Society opened a small museum and art gallery on the first floor of the building. The museum was open several hours each week and staffed by historical society members and volunteers. Funding shortages led to the closing of the museum and gallery after a few years, and by 1972, the Russell building was vacant except for a single office occupied by Dr. John Gerdes.[192] In the early 1970s, Charleston voters approved an Urban Renewal initiative and three blocks of Main Street were razed ca. 1975, including the building that housed the Mitchell Hotel, which was the only other known historic hotel left by that time.[193]

In 1977, Dave Francois of American Investment owned the Russell building. Francois and his sons renovated the building to serve as the Russell Retirement Home, an assisted living facility that opened in 1980. That project involved minor alterations to the rooms in the upper floors and some of the rooms on the lower level. It also appears to have included painting the exterior brick

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[188] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *Enterprise-Courier*, August 17, 1989, 12; "Leases Hotel," *Daily Standard* (Sikeston, Missouri), June 16, 1953, 1.

[189] Oral history interview with Melissa Graham, January 10, 2022, interview by author.

[190] "The History of the Russell Hotel," *The Enterprise-Courier*, August 17, 1989, 12.

[191] Jakle and Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels,* 144.

[192] Powell, *History of Mississippi County,* 124 and 283.

[193] Feezor, *History and Families of Mississippi County*, 32.

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walls and the removal of the neon sign. The senior housing project ended in bankruptcy around 1992.[194]

The building appears to have been vacant until 1999. That year, Melissa Pickett leased part of the building and opened "The Russell Café" in the original hotel dining room.[195] Pickett eventually bought the building and expanded services to include residential rentals on the upper floors. The Russell Café offered regular meals as well as parties, receptions, and banquets until it closed in the early 2000s.[196] In 2007, out-of-state developers attempted to revive the property for use as a bed and breakfast, art gallery and restaurant, but the project did not proceed, and the building closed again around 2008.[197] It is likely that the windows were replaced by Pickett or the bed and breakfast developers, and the building may have been repainted about that time as well. In 2010, that final failed redevelopment attempt landed the property on the "Places in Peril" list, Missouri Preservation's statewide list of endangered historic properties. It remained vacant and on that list until 2019, the same year the current owners purchased the property.

Conclusion
From its opening in 1918 to its closing as an operating hotel ca. 1965, the Russell was an important part of Charleston's commercial scene. The hotel helped attract travelers and businesspeople in the early days of automobile use, and the restaurants and other businesses that operated in the hotel catered to visitors as well as to local customers. The Russell represents a distinctive era of hotel development where local boosters constructed hotels in small cities and towns largely for the benefit of the local community. Similar to other community hotels constructed nationwide around the same time, the Russell was designed by a professional architect and remains one of the most architecturally-impressive commercial buildings in downtown Charleston. From the start, the hotel attracted regional attention and guests, and served as a prominent social hub, where residents gathered for meals, parties, receptions, and club meetings. With the opening of the Cellar in 1933, the Russell also became one of the most popular music venues in southeast Missouri. Although Charleston was home to more than eighteen hotels in the late 1800s and early 1900s, very few, if any other historic hotel buildings remain in Charleston today. The Russell is a rare survivor. It is a significant landmark that represents an era when large local hotels served as a center of commercial and social life and a source of civic pride. The Russell fulfilled that role in Charleston, Missouri for decades.

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[194] Amy Pickett, "The History of the Russell Hotel," January 31, 2003, (Charleston, MO), 4.
[195] Pickett, "The History of the Russell Hotel," 6.
[196] Pickett, "The History of the Russell Hotel," 6.
[197] "Russell Hotel," *Places in Peril*, Missouri Preservation, 2022.

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        Poplar Bluff (MO) Republican
        Sikeston (MO) Daily Standard
        Charleston (MO) Democrat

Periodicals
        Hotel Monthly
        Hotel World

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Verbal Boundary Description
Lots numbered 29, 30, 55, and 56 in the County Addition to the City of Charleston, Missouri, as shown by plat recorded in Plat Book 1 at Page 3 in the Recorder's Office of Mississippi County, Missouri.

Boundary Justification
The current boundaries encompass all of the land currently associated with the building. All of that land was historically part of the hotel property.

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Figure 1. Aerial photo, with a Scale and Coordinates. Google Earth, 2021.

Latitude	36.923506 degrees
Longitude	-89.348970 degrees

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Figure 2. Context Map. Google Earth, 2021.

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Figure 3. 1919 Sanborn Map (page 4), with current property lines added.

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Figure 4. Historic Post Cards. (Mississippi County Historical Society.)
Top: ca. 1920s, Bottom: Front, ca. 1930s.

THE RUSSELL HOTEL, CHARLESTON, MO.   J. R. MARABLE, OWNER.

THE RUSSELL HOTEL, CHARLESTON, MO., GEORGE N. MARABLE

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Figure 4. Continued Historic Post Cards. (Mississippi County Historical Society.)
Back, ca. 1930s.

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Figure 5. Top: View of West doorway looking west out to the street to show lack of early door frames. (Deb Sheals 2021) Bottom: Photo of the building published in a brochure in 1981, showing the west doorway without street-level doors. (Mississippi County Historical Society.)

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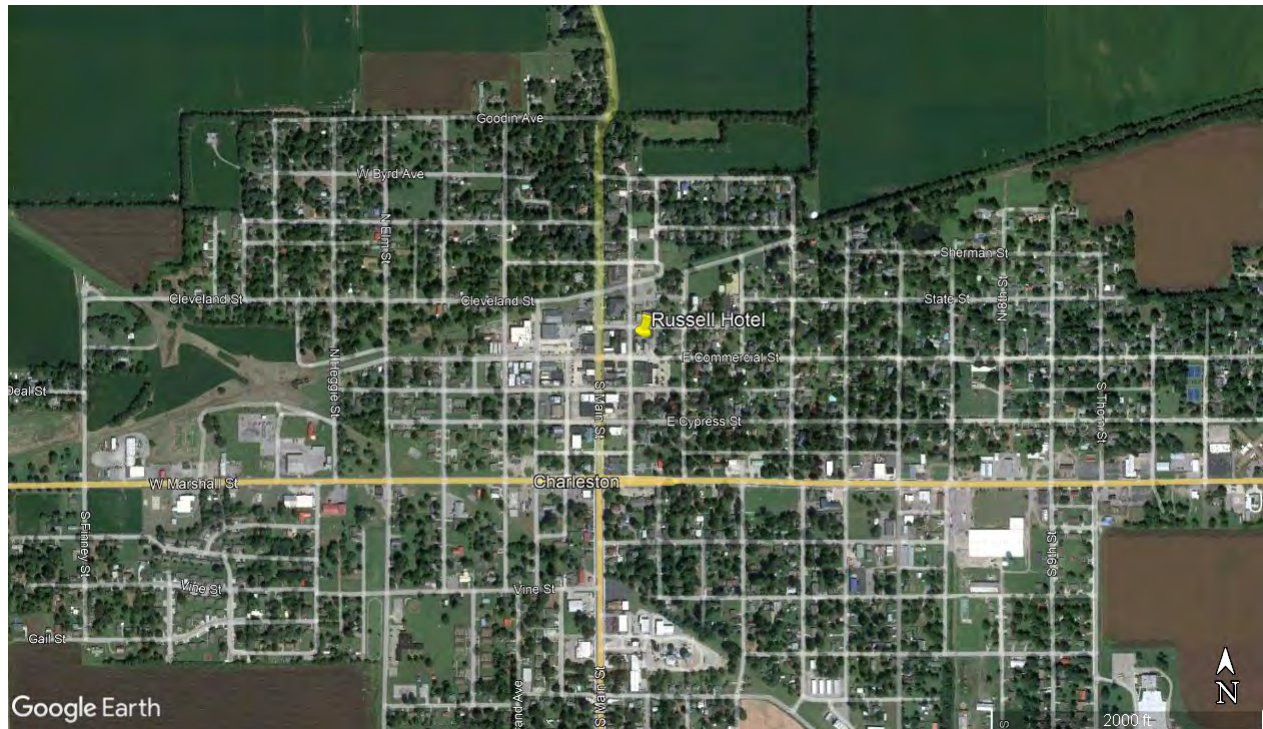
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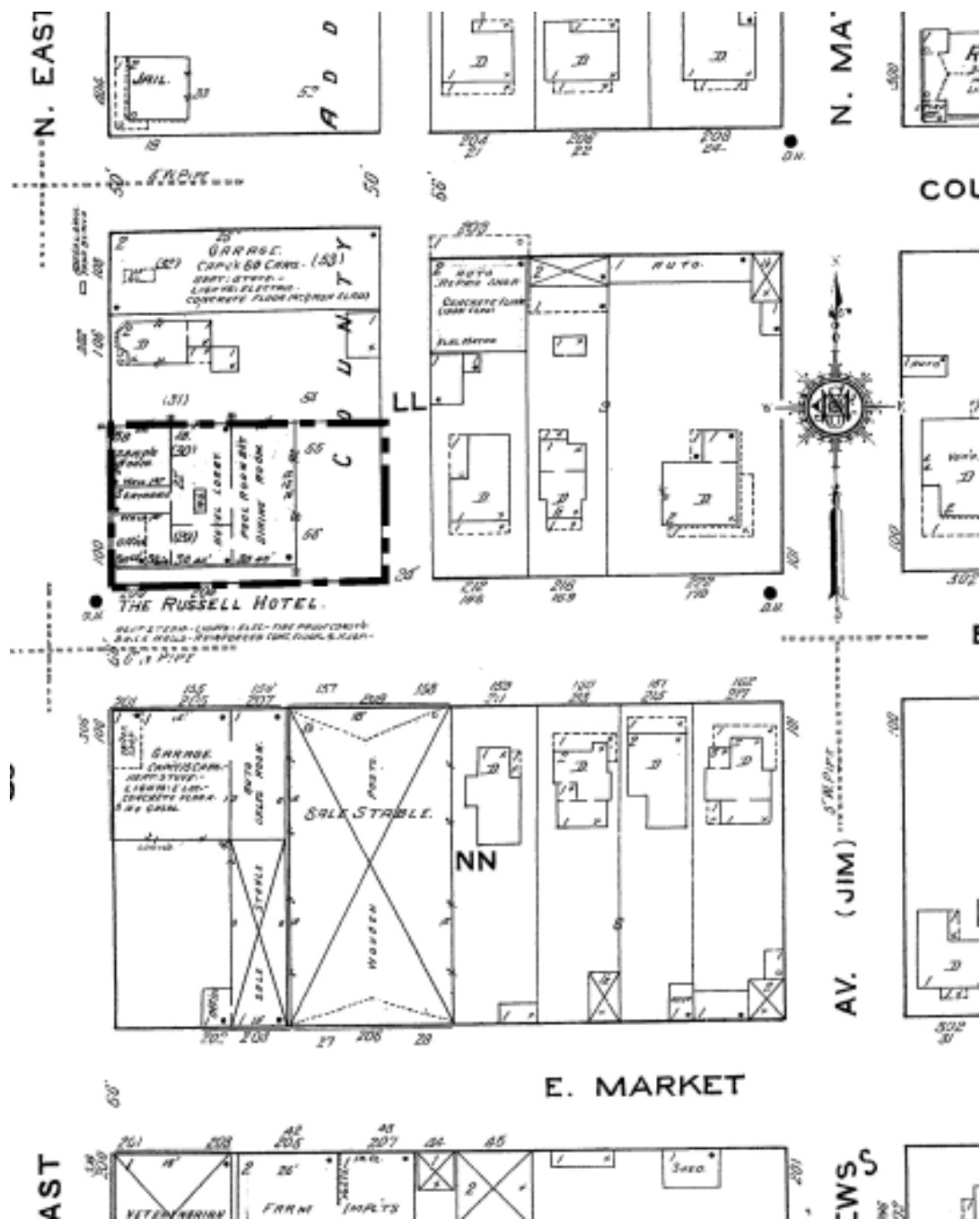Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 6. "Ladies Waiting Nook." Top, looking south from the staircase. Bottom, looking southwest past the first-floor stairs. Red arrow points to the nook. (Deb Sheals 2021.)

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Figure 7. Sketch Plan of First Floor, Current Conditions. Not to scale. (Deb Sheals 2022.)

First Floor
DMENSIONS AND ROOM CONFIGURATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE
* = NEW WALL

SAMPLE ROOM

KITCHEN

SERVING ROOM

Many finishes have been removed in this area.

SAMPLE ROOM

*
Glass block infill is not original

DN.

OFFICE/ WRITING ROOM

* Numerous modern partitions are in place in this area.

DN.   UP

LADIES WAITING NOOK

LOBBY

DINING ROOM

* This doorway is early but may not be original.

70.00 ft

90.00 ft

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Figure 8. Sketch Plan of Lower Level, Current Conditions. Not to scale. (Deb Sheals 2022.)

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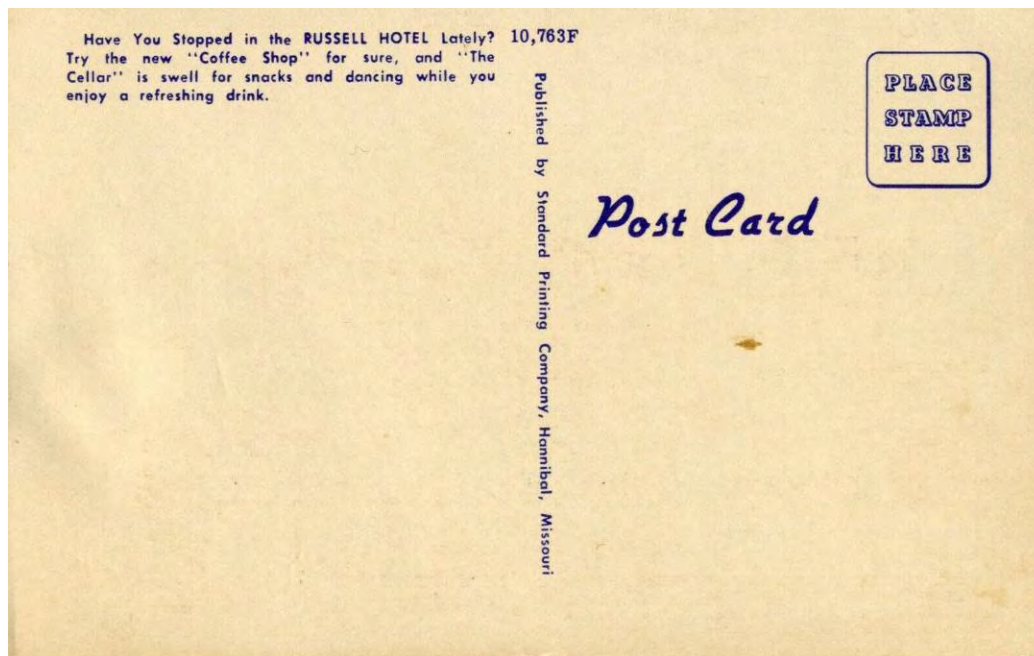**Continuation Sheet**

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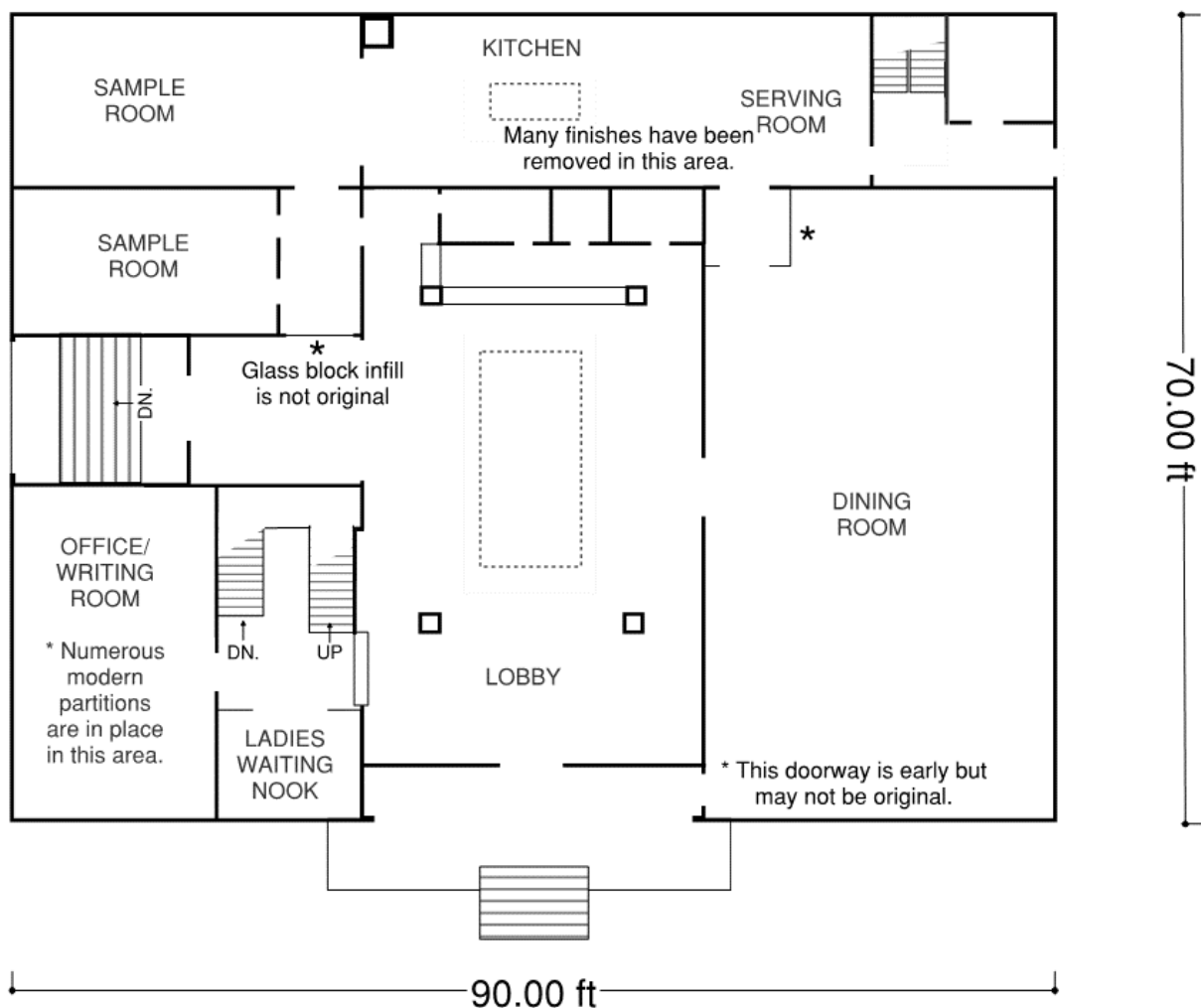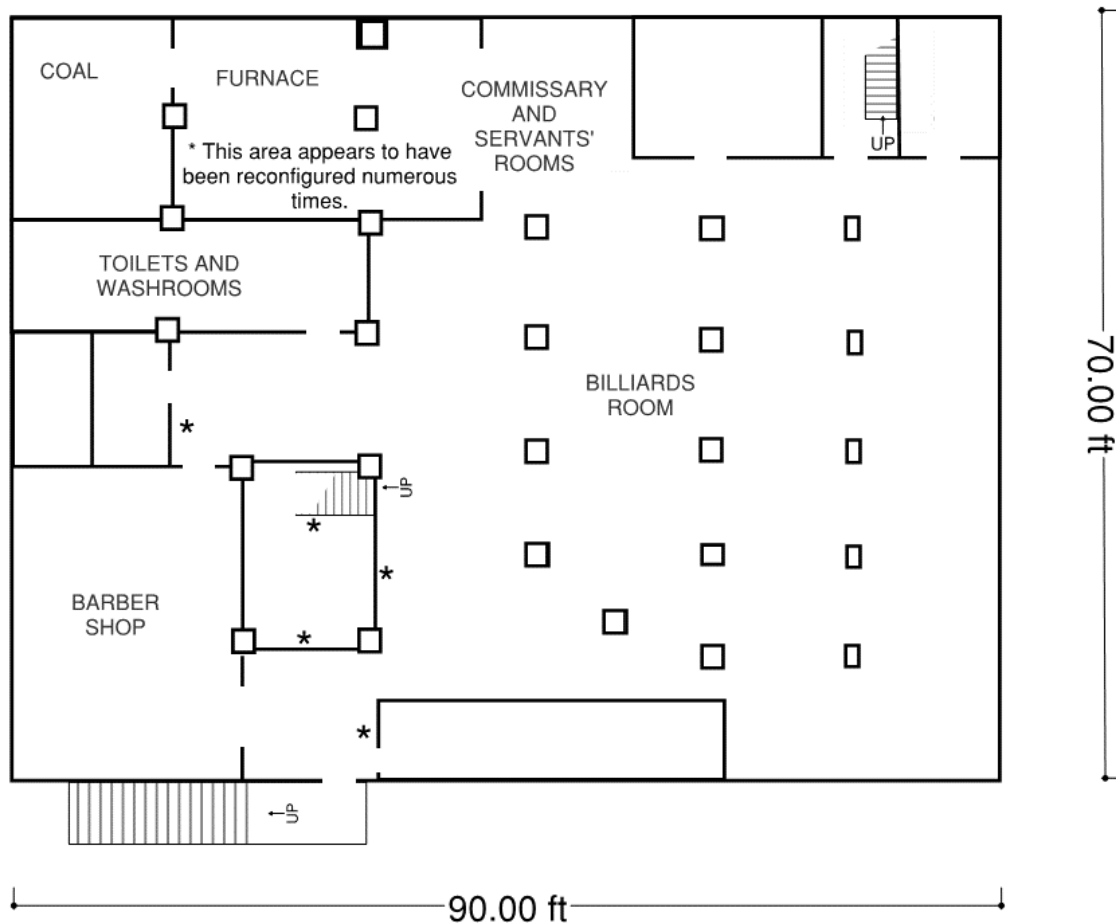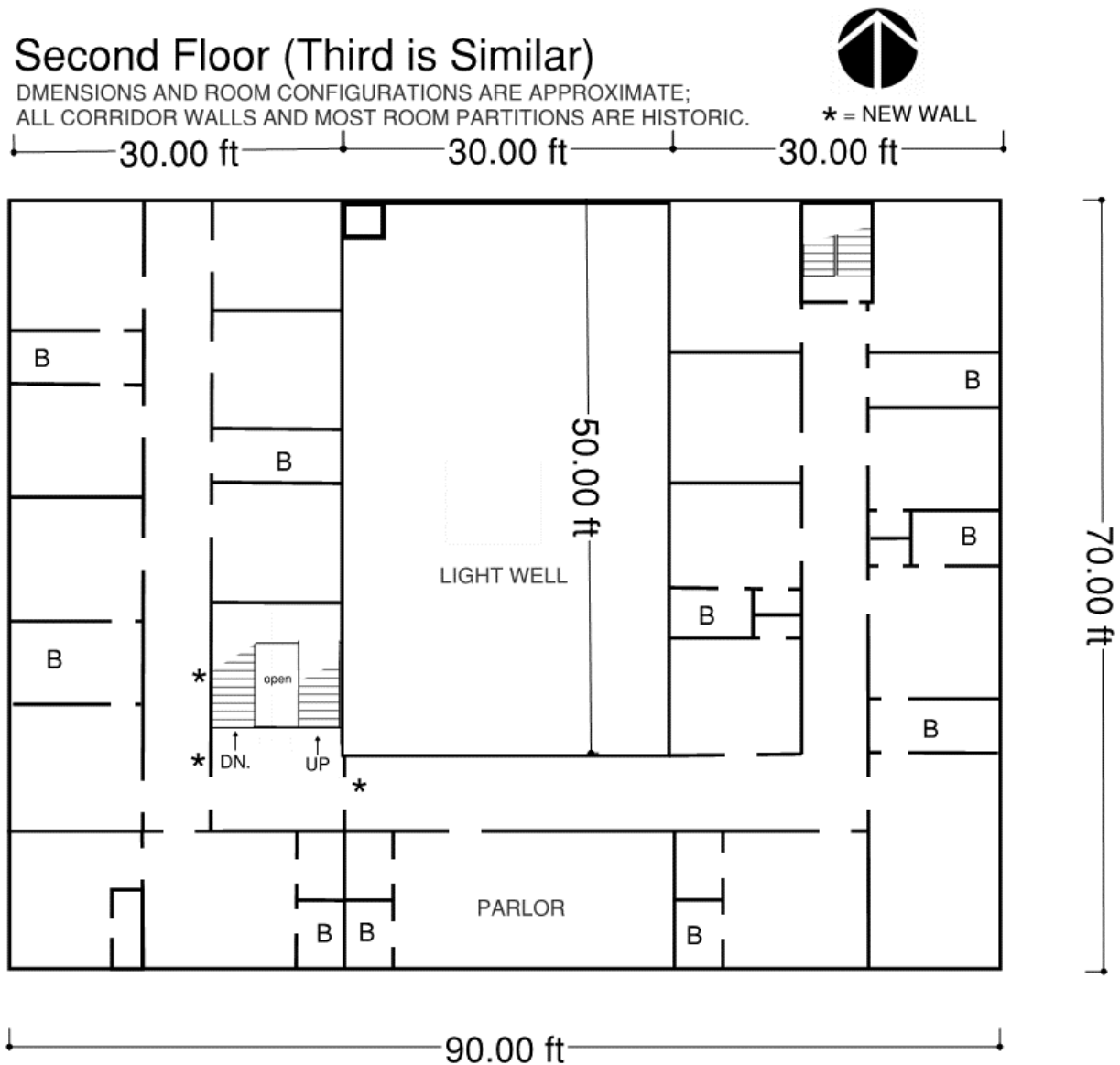Name of Property
Mississippi County, MO
County and State
  N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 9. Sketch Plan of Second Floor Current Conditions. Not to scale. (Deb Sheals 2021.)

Second Floor (Third is Similar)
DMENSIONS AND ROOM CONFIGURATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE;
ALL CORRIDOR WALLS AND MOST ROOM PARTITIONS ARE HISTORIC.   ✱ = NEW WALL

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Figure 10. Charleston Hotels, ca. 1837-1965

Hotel Name	Dates of Operation	Owners/ Managers	Extant?	Location	Notes	Citations
Unknown	ca. 1830s-1840s	Thankful Randol	No	Unknown	Although Thankful Randol purchased a log cabin on the northwest corner of Center and Cypress Streets (not extant), it is not clear if that is where her hotel was located.	*Goodspeed's History of Southeast Missouri*, 465; Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 106.
Whitcomb Hotel	1854-1885	George Whitcomb, J.N. Walgamot, Joseph Courtway	No, building destroyed by fire in 1885	West Commercial Street between Franklin and Main Streets	Renamed the Kenrick Hotel in 1889. On Sanborn maps, there are sections of the city known as Whitcomb Hotel Addition.	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 109, 112 and 303; James, *Historic Hotels of Missouri*, 312; Various ads in *Enterprise-Courier*.
Charleston Hotel	1859-1904	W.G. Cooley, C. Spaulding, L.W. Danforth	No, destroyed by fire in 1904	Corner of Main Street and Commercial Ave	First known as Cooley House, then Charleston Hotel. Briefly renamed Prairie House in 1867.	James, *Historic Hotels of Missouri*, 312; *Enterprise-Courier*, 1859-1904. Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 122.
Fisher's Hotel	ca. 1876	Mr. Fisher	Unknown	"Commercial Street near railroad"	N/A	James, *Historic Hotels of Missouri*, 312. *Charleston Enterprise*, March 16, 1876.
Hotel Fletcher	ca. 1881-ca. 1895	Eliza Fletcher	Unknown	Unknown	Eliza Fletcher also managed the Kenrick Hotel.	James, 314B; *Enterprise-Courier*, March 16, 1876; Powell, History of Mississippi County, 122.
Commercial Hotel	1881-1887	L.W. Danforth, Lorenzo Owen	No, destroyed by fire in 1885	SE corner of Franklin and Commercial Streets	N/A	*Charleston Courier*, February 22, 1868, 3; Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 111.
Kenrick Hotel/ Hotel Kenrick	1889-1914	Mr. Kendrick, Eliza Fletcher, George Gassman	No, destroyed by fire in 1914	108-110 West Commercial	Same location as the Whitcomb Hotel. There was a downtown building named Kenrick also, but it was not the building that housed the hotel. That building was razed in ca. 1975.	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 123 and 303; Various ads in *Enterprise-Courier*.
Hotel Swain	ca. 1886	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	N/A	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 112.

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Hotel Loflin	ca. 1896	Unknown	No, destroyed by fire in 1896	Unknown	N/A	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 119-120.
Southern Hotel	1883-1897	A.H. Danforth, Mrs. McCormack	No, destroyed by fire in 1897	Unknown	N/A	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 119-120.
Heggie Hotel	ca. 1893	Mr. Morris	Unknown	"Near the depot"	N/A	Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 114.
Mitchell Hotel	1898-ca. 1975	D.D. Mitchell, George Mitchell, Lawrence Gunther	No, razed ca. 1975	202 West Commercial Street	1902: 50-room addition	1900-1930 Census Records; Powell, *History of Mississippi County*, 114.
Unknown	ca. 1900-1910	Allen Goodin	Unknown	Unknown	African-American owned and operated	1900 Census Records
Russell Hotel	1918-ca. 1965	J.J. Russell, Marable family	Yes	200 East Commercial	N/A	Various sources listed in Bibliography
Unknown	ca. 1910-1920	Mollie Cruse	No, verified on Google Earth	339 Air Line Road	African-American owned and operated	1910 Census; Burnett, *Charleston Had It All*, 305.
Terminal Hotel	ca. 1910-1920	Unknown	No, verified on Google Earth	"Near the depot," perhaps located at 605 West Commercial	No evidence of hotel can be located, only referenced in Burnett's *Charleston Had It All.*	1910 Census; Burnett, *Charleston Had It All*, 305.
Cottage Hotel	ca. 1910-1920	Unknown	Unknown	West Market	No evidence of hotel can be located, only referenced in Burnett's *Charleston Had It All.*	Burnett, *Charleston Had It All*, 305.
Baker House	ca. 1910-1920	Unknown	Unknown	Corner of South Main and Pecan Streets	No evidence of hotel can be located, only referenced in Burnett's *Charleston Had It All.*	Burnett, *Charleston Had It All*, 305.
Unknown	ca. 1920-1930	Emma M. Sigow	Unknown	210 S. Elm Street	African-American owned and operated	1920 Census Records

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Figure 11. Buildings Designed by W. E. Parlow.

Based on Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel," *Southeast Missourian: From the Morgue* (Cape Girardeau, MO), July 17, 2018, accessed 2021, and "W.E. Parlow Dead," *Osceola Times (Osceola, Arkansas)* July 9, 1920, 1.

Name:
Addition to Hotel
Idan-Ha

Location:
Cape Girardeau

Date:
1912

Sources:
"Hotel Indian-Ha, *Southeast Missourian*, Oct. 26, 2009.

Name:
Mississippi
County, AR
Courthouse

Location:
Oceola, Arkansas

Date:
1913

Sources:
"Commissioners Receive New Courthouse," The Oceola (AR) Times, Aug. 15, 1913, 1.

Name:
Lincoln School
(Addition)

Location:
Cape Girardeau

Date:
1914

Sources:
Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name:
Lormier
Apartments

Location:
Cape Girardeau

Date:
1914

Sources:
Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name:
Park Theater

Location:
Cape Girardeau

Date:
1914

Sources:
Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name:
Washington
School

Location:
Cape Girardeau

Date:
1914

Sources:
Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

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Figure 11. Continued Buildings Designed by W. E. Parlow.

Based on Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel," *Southeast Missourian: From the Morgue* (Cape Girardeau, MO), July 17, 2018, accessed 2021, and "W.E. Parlow Dead," *Osceola Times (Osceola, Arkansas)* July 9, 1920, 1.

Name: Bandstand/Gazebo in Ivers Square
Location: Cape Girardeau
Date: 1916
Sources: Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name: Buckner Ragsdale Building (With partner C. Deas)
Location: Cape Girardeau
Date: 1916
Sources: Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo by Deb Sheals, 2021.

Name: Walther's Furniture (With Partner C. Deas)
Location: Cape Girardeau
Date: 1916
Sources: Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name: Frisco Passenger Station (With R. C. Stephens)
Location: Cape Girardeau
Date: 1917
Sources: Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Southeast Missourian.

Name: The Russell Hotel
Location: Charleston, MO
Date: 1918
Sources: Photo by Deb Sheals 2021.

Name: Byrd, J. L., House
Location: Charleston
Date: 1919
Sources: Sharon Sanders, "Cape Girardeau architect designed Charleston's Russell Hotel." Photo from Google Earth.

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Figure 12. Local Comparative Properties.

Name
Focus Bank

Location
Main and
Commercial
Streets
Charleston

Date
ca. 1910s

Sources   Image from Google Earth 2021.

Name
J. J. Russell Office
Building

Location
Main and Court
Streets,
Charleston

Date
1907

Sources   Image from Google Earth, 2022; Betty Powell, History
of Mississippi County, 122.

Name
W. C. Bryant
Building

Location
Main and Cypress
Streets,
Charleston

Date
1918

Sources   Image from Goggle Earth 2022, Datestone on buiodng.

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Figure 13. Photo of the Russell Hotel Construction, ca. July 1917. (Kenny Hulshof)

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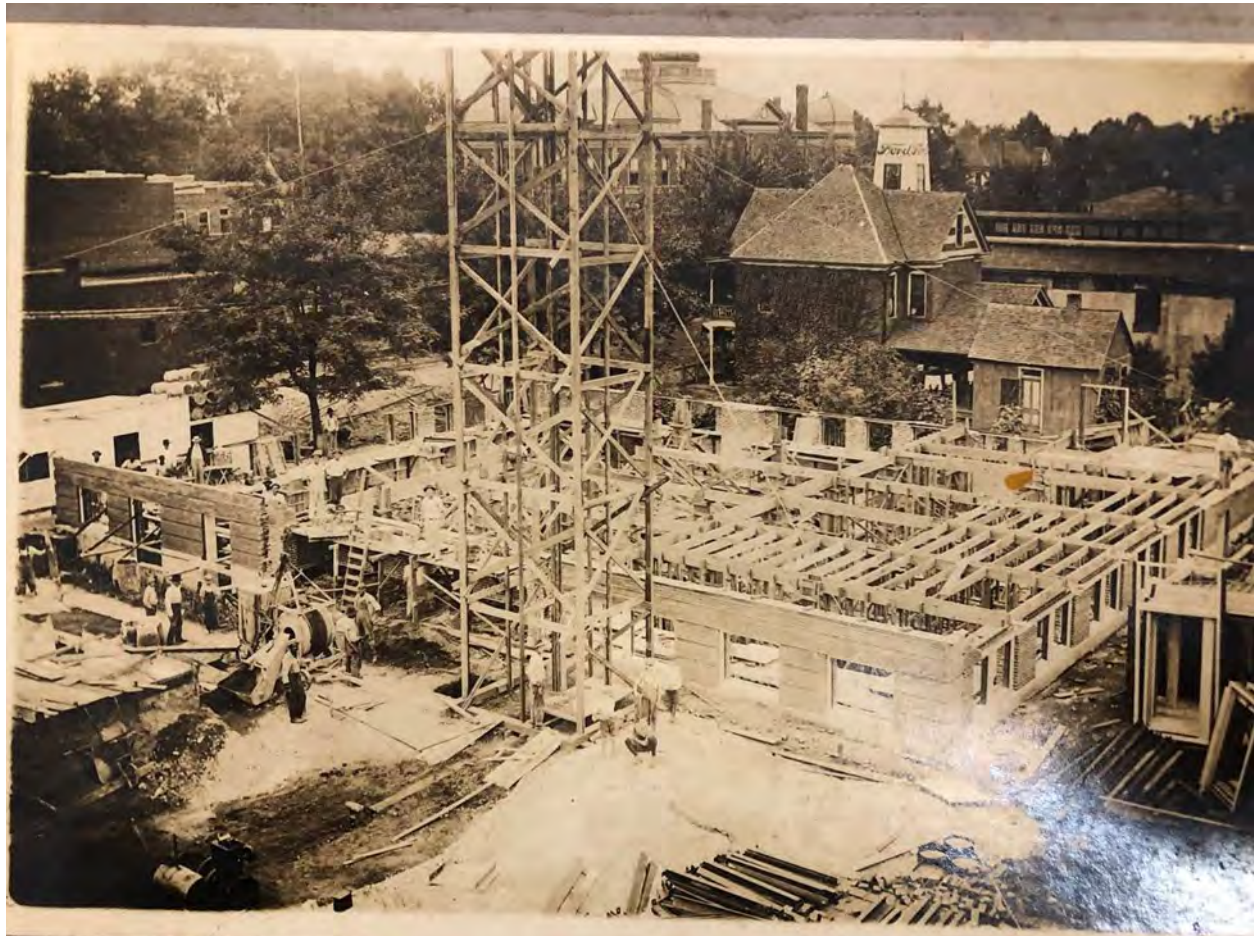National Register of Historic Places
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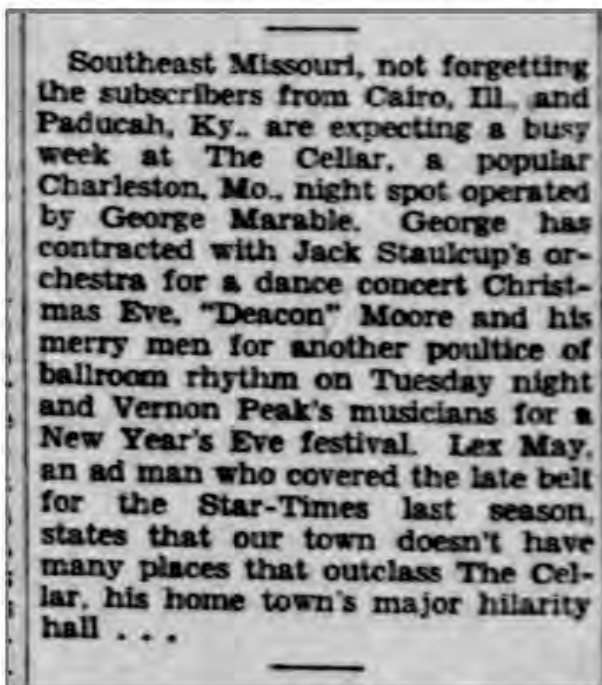
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Figure 14. Assorted Advertisements for Events in the Russell Hotel.

The St. Louis Star and Times (St. Louis, Missouri) · 22 Dec 1938, Thu · Page 23

Southeast Missouri, not forgetting the subscribers from Cairo, Ill., and Paducah, Ky., are expecting a busy week at The Cellar, a popular Charleston, Mo., night spot operated by George Marable. George has contracted with Jack Staulcup's orchestra for a dance concert Christmas Eve, "Deacon" Moore and his merry men for another poultice of ballroom rhythm on Tuesday night and Vernon Peak's musicians for a New Year's Eve festival. Lex May, an ad man who covered the late belt for the Star-Times last season, states that our town doesn't have many places that outclass The Cellar, his home town's major hilarity hall . . .

Newspapers by ancestry   The Daily Standard (Sikeston, Missouri) · 10 Nov 1951, Sat · Page 3
                                 Downloaded on Dec 14, 2021

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1951   THE DAILY STANDARD, SIKESTON, MISSOURI   PAGE THREE

"Jolanda" and Her Dances Direct From Budapest, Hungary - The Cellar - Russell Hotel Charleston Mo.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10. — DANCING — WE ARE SERVING THE BEST OF STEAKS

Newspapers by ancestry   The Daily Standard (Sikeston, Missouri) · 1 Dec 1951, Sat · Page 6
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PAGE SIX   THE DAILY STANDARD, SIKESTON, MISSOURI   SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1951

EVERY SATURDAY - JERRY ABERNATHY & HIS ORCHESTRA - The Cellar - Russell Hotel
FLOOR SHOW - DANCING 8-12 - ANN KELLEY AT THE HAMMOND ORGAN SUNDAYS - MARABLE'S COFFEE SHOP.

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Figure 15. Dining Room of the Russell, 1953. (Mississippi County Historical Society, in Mildred Reeves Burnett, *Charleston Had it All*, Morley, MO: Acclaim Press, 2013.)

Dinner given at Russell Hotel in honor of Lola Holmes and Stella Jordan. Standing, left to right: Mae Hequembourg, Kate Bryant, Elizabeth Machol, Wanitta Shelby, Anita Hummel, Jerry Careon, Mrs. Presson Hunter, Stella Jordan, Nell Oliver. Seated left to right: Emma Cornwall, Myrtle Gillooly, Carolyn McDowoell, Girtrude Bird, Fan Goodin, Lella Harris, Lola Holmes, Rose Davin, March 28, 1953.
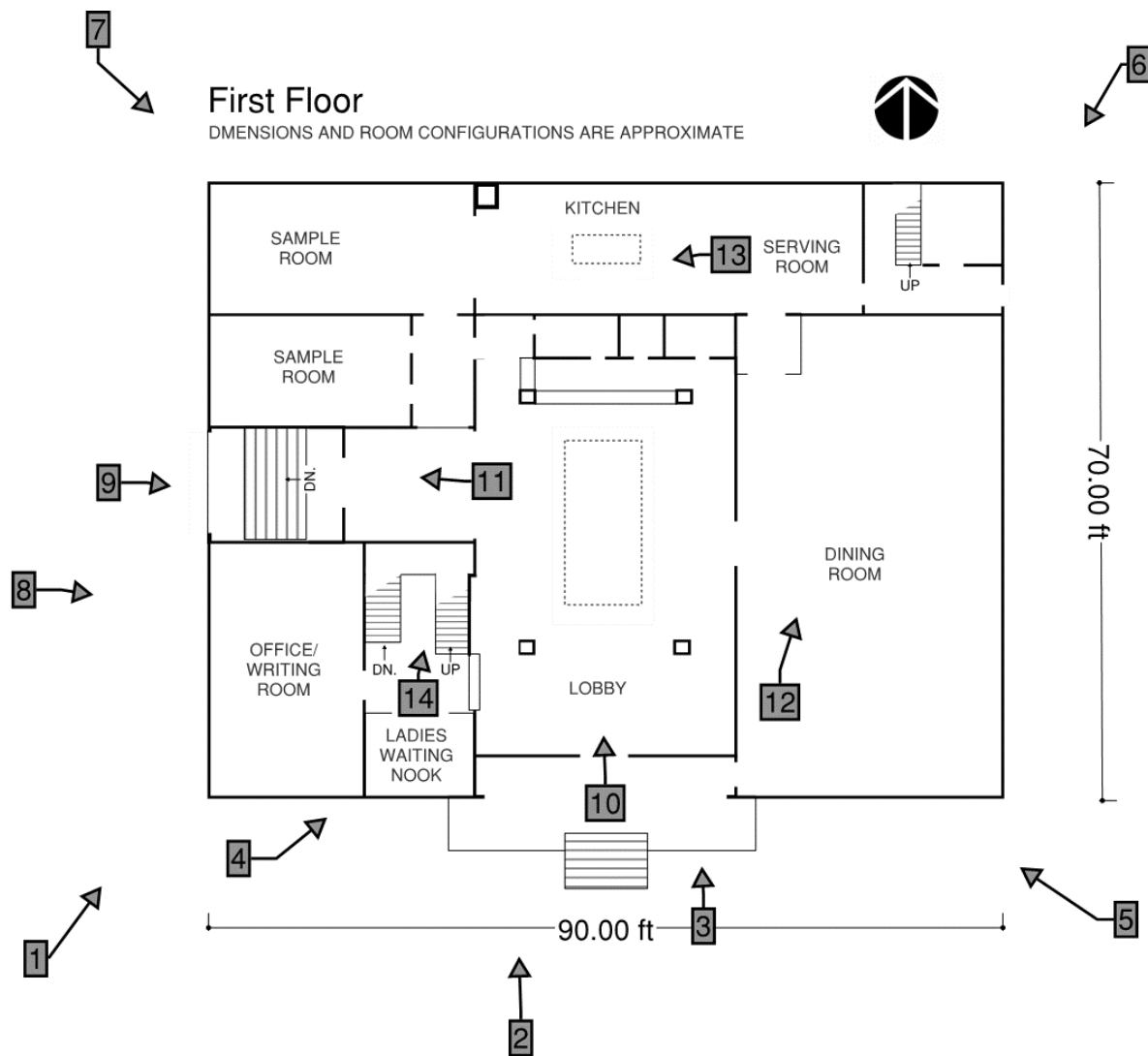
NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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OMB No. 1024-001

Russell Hotel
Name of Property
Mississippi County, MO
County and State
 N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 16. Photo Key. First Floor.

First Floor
DMENSIONS AND ROOM CONFIGURATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

KITCHEN

SAMPLE ROOM

SERVING ROOM

UP

SAMPLE ROOM

DN.

OFFICE/ WRITING ROOM

DN. UP

LADIES WAITING NOOK

LOBBY

DINING ROOM

70.00 ft

90.00 ft

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Russell Hotel
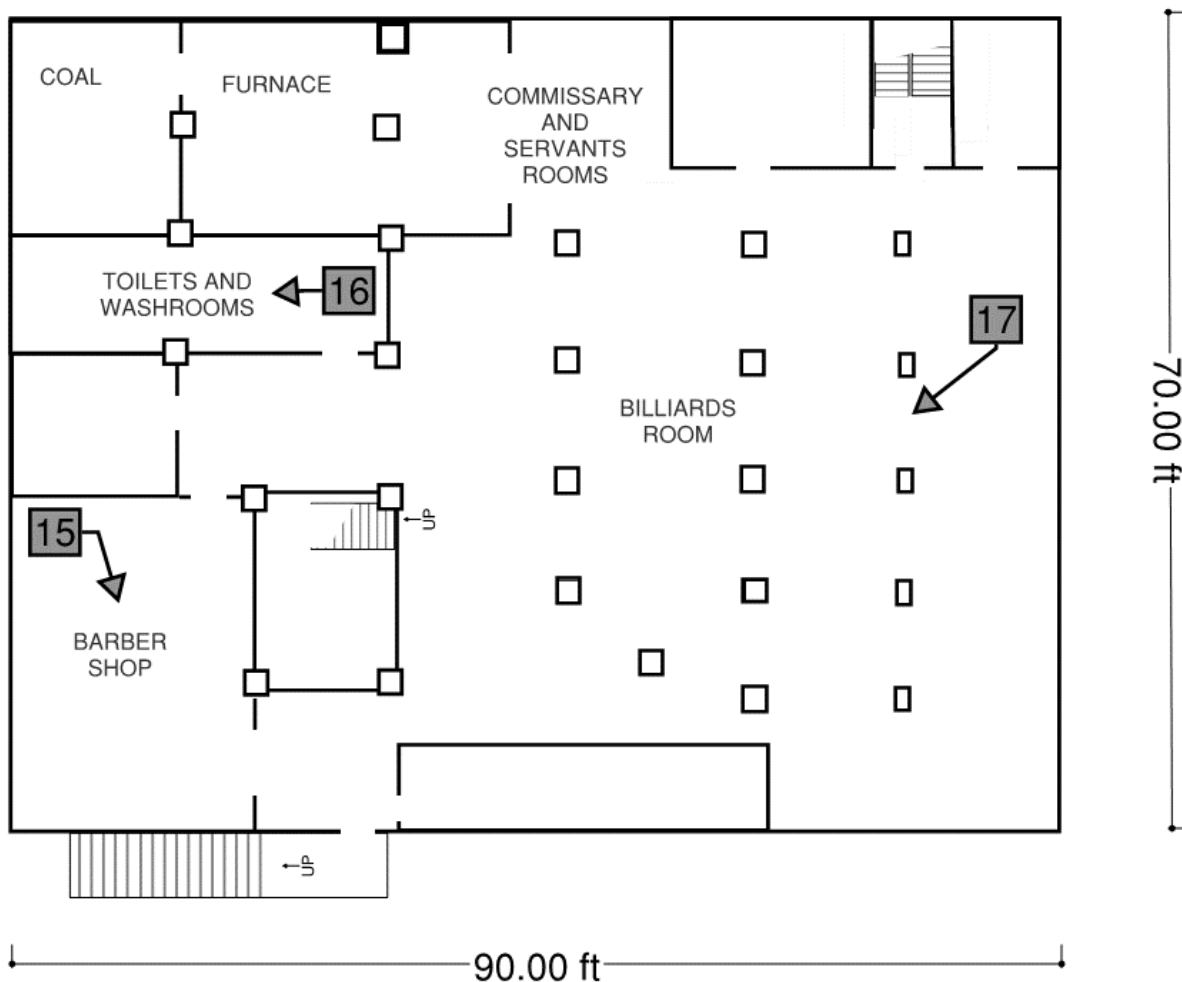Name of Property
Mississippi County, MO
County and State
 N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 16. Photo Key, continued. Lower Level.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Russell Hotel
Name of Property
Mississippi County, MO
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 16. Photo Key, continued. Second Floor.

Second Floor (Third is Similar)
DMENSIONS AND ROOM CONFIGURATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

THE RUSSELL.